SELECTED OPERAS

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
LONDON · BOMBAY · CALCUTTA · MADRAS
MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
NEW YORK · BOSTON · CHICAGO
DALLAS · ATLANTA · SAN FRANCISCO

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
OF CANADA, LIMITED
TORONTO

SELECTED OPERAS

FIRST SERIES

BY

SIR W. S. GILBERT

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON
1930

COPYRIGHT

First published in The Caravan Library 1928
Reprinted 1930

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY R. & R. CLARK, LIMITED, EDINBURGH

CONTENTS

	PAGE
TRIAL BY JURY	1
PATIENCE; OR, BUNTHORNE'S BRIDE	21
THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD; OR, THE MERRYMAN AND HIS MAID	73
THE GONDOLIERS; OR, THE KING OF BARATARIA .	137

TRIAL BY JURY

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE LEARNED JUDGE.
THE PLAINTIFF.
THE DEFENDANT.
COUNSEL FOR THE PLAINTIFF.
USHER.
FOREMAN OF THE JURY.
ASSOCIATE.
FIRST BRIDESMAID.

First produced at the Royalty Theatre, March 25, 1875.

TRIAL BY JURY

SCENE.—*A Court of Justice.*

Barristers, Attorneys, and Jurymen discovered.

CHORUS.

Hark, the hour of ten is sounding :
Hearts with anxious fears are bounding,
Hall of Justice crowds surrounding,
Breathing hope and fear—
For to-day in this arena,
Summoned by a stern subpœna,
Edwin, sued by Angelina,
Shortly will appear.

Enter USHER.

SOLO—USHER.

Now, Jurymen, hear my advice—
All kinds of vulgar prejudice
I pray you set aside :
With stern judicial frame of mind
From bias free of every kind,
This trial must be tried.

CHORUS.

From bias free of every kind,
This trial must be tried.

(*During Chorus,* USHER *sings fortissimo,* "*Silence in Court!*")

USHER.

Oh, listen to the plaintiff's case:
Observe the features of her face—
The broken-hearted bride.
Condole with her distress of mind:
From bias free of every kind,
This trial must be tried!

CHORUS.

From bias free, etc.

USHER.

And when amid the plaintiff's shrieks,
The ruffianly defendant speaks—
Upon the other side;
What *he* may say you needn't mind—
From bias free of every kind,
This trial must be tried!

CHORUS.

From bias free, etc.

Enter DEFENDANT.

RECIT.—DEFENDANT.

Is this the Court of the Exchequer?

ALL.

It is!

DEFENDANT (*aside*).

Be firm, be firm, my pecker,
Your evil star's in the ascendant!

ALL

Who are you?

DEFENDANT

I'm the Defendant!

CHORUS OF JURYMEN (*shaking their fists*).

Monster, dread our damages.
We're the jury,
Dread our fury!

DEFENDANT.

Hear me, hear me, if you please,
These are very strange proceedings—
For permit me to remark
On the merits of my pleadings,
You're at present in the dark.

(DEFENDANT *beckons to* JURYMEN—*they leave the box and gather round him as they sing the following*):

That's a very true remark—
On the merits of his pleadings
We're at present in the dark!
Ha! ha!—ha! ha!

SONG—DEFENDANT.

When first my old, old love I knew,
My bosom welled with joy;
My riches at her feet I threw—
I was a love-sick boy!
No terms seemed too extravagant
Upon her to employ—
I used to mope, and sigh, and pant,
Just like a love-sick boy!
Tink-a-Tank—Tink-a-Tank.

But joy incessant palls the sense;
And love, unchanged, will cloy,
And she became a bore intense
Unto her love-sick boy!
With fitful glimmer burnt my flame,
And I grew cold and coy,
At last, one morning, I became
Another's love-sick boy.
Tink-a-Tank—Tink-a-Tank.

CHORUS OF JURYMEN (*advancing stealthily*).

Oh, I was like that when a lad!
A shocking young scamp of a rover,
I behaved like a regular cad;
But that sort of thing is all over.
I'm now a respectable chap
And shine with a virtue resplendent,
And, therefore, I haven't a scrap
Of sympathy with the defendant!
He shall treat us with awe,
If there isn't a flaw,
Singing so merrily—Trial-la-law!
Trial-la-law—Trial-la-law!
Singing so merrily—Trial-la-law!
(*They enter the Jury-box.*)

RECIT.—USHER (*on Bench*).

Silence in Court, and all attention lend.
Behold your Judge! In due submission bend!

Enter JUDGE *on Bench.*

CHORUS.

All hail great Judge!
To your bright rays
We never grudge
Ecstatic praise.
All hail!
May each decree
As statute rank,
And never be
Reversed in banc.
All hail!

RECIT.—JUDGE.

For these kind words accept my thanks, I pray.
A Breach of Promise we've to try to-day.
But firstly, if the time you'll not begrudge,
I'll tell you how I came to be a Judge.

ALL.

He'll tell us how he came to be a Judge!

SONG—JUDGE.

When I, good friends, was called to the bar,
I'd an appetite fresh and hearty,
But I was, as many young barristers are,
An impecunious party.
I'd a swallow-tail coat of a beautiful blue—
A brief which I bought of a booby—
A couple of shirts and a collar or two,
And a ring that looked like a ruby!

CHORUS.

A couple of shirts, etc.

JUDGE.

In Westminster Hall I danced a dance,
Like a semi-despondent fury;
For I thought I should never hit on a chance
Of addressing a British Jury—
But I soon got tired of third-class journeys,
And dinners of bread and water;
So I fell in love with a rich attorney's
Elderly, ugly daughter.

CHORUS.

So he fell in love, etc.

JUDGE.

The rich attorney, he jumped with joy,
And replied to my fond professions:
"You shall reap the reward of your pluck, my boy
At the Bailey and Middlesex Sessions.
You'll soon get used to her looks," said he,
"And a very nice girl you'll find her!
She may very well pass for forty-three
In the dusk, with a light behind her!"

CHORUS.

She may very well, etc.

JUDGE.

The rich attorney was good as his word;
The briefs came trooping gaily,
And every day my voice was heard
At the Sessions or Ancient Bailey.
All thieves who could my fees afford
Relied on my orations,
And many a burglar I've restored
To his friends and his relations.

CHORUS.

And many a burglar, etc.

JUDGE.

At length I became as rich as the Gurneys—
An incubus then I thought her,
So I threw over that rich attorney's
Elderly, ugly daughter.
The rich attorney my character high
Tried vainly to disparage—
And now, if you please, I'm ready to try
This Breach of Promise of Marriage!

CHORUS.

And now if you please, etc.

JUDGE.

For now I am a Judge!

ALL.

And a good Judge too.

JUDGE.

Yes, now I am a Judge!

ALL.
And a good Judge too!

JUDGE.
Though all my law is fudge,
Yet I'll never, never budge,
But I'll live and die a Judge!

ALL.
And a good Judge too!

JUDGE (*pianissimo*).
It was managed by a job—

ALL.
And a good job too!

JUDGE.
It was managed by a job!

ALL.
And a good job too!

JUDGE.
It is patent to the mob,
That my being made a nob
Was effected by a job.

ALL.
And a good job too!

Enter COUNSEL *for* PLAINTIFF. *He takes his place in front row of Counsels' seats.*

RECIT.—COUNSEL.
Swear thou the Jury!

USHER.
Kneel, Jurymen, oh, kneel!

(*All the* JURY *kneel in the Jury-box, and so are hidden from audience.*)

USHER.

Oh, will you swear by yonder skies,
Whatever question may arise,
'Twixt rich and poor, 'twixt low and high,
That you will well and truly try?

JURY (*raising their hands, which alone are visible*).

To all of this we make reply,
By the dull slate of yonder sky:
That we will well and truly try.

(*All rise with the last note.*)

RECIT.—COUNSEL.

Where is the Plaintiff?
Let her now be brought.

RECIT.—USHER.

Oh, Angelina! Come thou into Court!
Angelina! Angelina!!

Enter the BRIDESMAIDS.

CHORUS OF BRIDESMAIDS.

Comes the broken flower—
Comes the cheated maid—
Though the tempest lower,
Rain and cloud will fade!
Take, oh take these posies:
Though thy beauty rare
Shame the blushing roses,
They are passing fair!
Wear the flowers till they fade;
Happy be thy life, oh maid!

(*The* JUDGE, *having taken a great fancy to* FIRST BRIDESMAID, *sends her a note by* USHER, *which she reads, kisses rapturously, and places in her bosom.*)

Enter PLAINTIFF.

SOLO—Plaintiff.

O'er the season vernal,
Time may cast a shade;
Sunshine, if eternal,
Makes the roses fade!
Time may do his duty;
Let the thief alone—
Winter hath a beauty,
That is all his own.
Fairest days are sun and shade:
I am no unhappy maid!

(*The* Judge *having by this time transferred his admiration to* Plaintiff, *directs the Usher to take the note from* First Bridesmaid *and hand it to* Plaintiff, *who reads it, kisses it rapturously, and places it in her bosom.*)

Chorus of Bridesmaids.

Comes the broken flower, etc.

Judge.

Oh, never, never, never, since I joined the human race,
Saw I so exquisitely fair a face.

The Jury (*shaking their forefingers at him*).
Ah, sly dog! Ah, sly dog!

Judge (*to* Jury).

How say you? Is she not designed for capture?

Foreman (*after consulting with the* Jury).

We've but one word, my lord, and that is—Rapture.

Plaintiff (*curtseying*).

Your kindness, gentlemen, quite overpowers!

Jury.

We love you fondly and would make you ours!

THE BRIDESMAIDS (*shaking their forefingers at* JURY).

Ah, sly dogs! Ah, sly dogs!

RECIT.—COUNSEL *for* PLAINTIFF.

May it please you, my lud!
Gentlemen of the jury!

ARIA.

With a sense of deep emotion,
I approach this painful case;
For I never had a notion
That a man could be so base,
Or deceive a girl confiding,
Vows, *etcetera*, deriding.

ALL.

He deceived a girl confiding,
Vows, *etcetera*, deriding.

(PLAINTIFF *falls sobbing on* COUNSEL'S *breast and remains there.*)

COUNSEL.

See my interesting client,
Victim of a heartless wile!
See the traitor all defiant
Wear a supercilious smile!
Sweetly smiled my client on him,
Coyly woo'd and gently won him.

ALL.

Sweetly smiled, etc.

COUNSEL.

Swiftly fled each honeyed hour
Spent with this unmanly male!
Camberwell became a bower,
Peckham an Arcadian Vale,
Breathing concentrated otto!—
An existence *à la* Watteau.

ALL.

Bless us, concentrated otto ! etc.

COUNSEL.

Picture, then, my client naming,
And insisting on the day :
Picture him excuses framing—
Going from her far away ;
Doubly criminal to do so,
For the maid had bought her *trousseau* !

ALL.

Doubly criminal, etc.

COUNSEL (*to* PLAINTIFF, *who weeps*).

Cheer up, my pretty—oh, cheer up !

JURY.

Cheer up, cheer up, we love you !

(COUNSEL *leads* PLAINTIFF *fondly into Witness-box ; he takes a tender leave of her, and resumes his place in Court.*)

(PLAINTIFF *reels as if about to faint.*)

JUDGE.

That she is reeling
Is plain to see !

FOREMAN.

If faint you're feeling
Recline on me !

(*She falls sobbing on to the* FOREMAN'S *breast.*)

PLAINTIFF (*feebly*).

I shall recover
If left alone.

ALL (*shaking their fists at* DEFENDANT)
Oh, perjured lover,
Atone ! atone !

FOREMAN.
Just like a father
I wish to be. (*Kissing her.*)

JUDGE (*approaching her*).
Or, if you'd rather,
Recline on me !

(*She jumps on to Bench, sits down by the* JUDGE, *and falls sobbing on his breast.*)

COUNSEL.
Oh ! fetch some water
From far Cologne !

ALL.
For this sad slaughter
Atone ! atone !

JURY (*shaking fists at* DEFENDANT).
Monster, monster, dread our fury—
There's the Judge, and we're the Jury !
Come ! Substantial damages,
Dam—

USHER.
Silence in Court !

SONG—DEFENDANT.
Oh, gentlemen, listen, I pray,
Though I own that my heart has been ranging,
Of nature the laws I obey,
For nature is constantly changing.
The moon in her phases is found,
The time and the wind and the weather,
The months in succession come round,
And you don't find two Mondays together.
Consider the moral, I pray,
Nor bring a young fellow to sorrow,
Who loves this young lady to-day,
And loves that young lady to-morrow.

BRIDESMAIDS (*rushing forward, and kneeling to* JURY).

Consider the moral, etc.

You cannot eat breakfast all day,
Nor is it the act of a sinner,
When breakfast is taken away,
To turn your attention to dinner;
And it's not in the range of belief,
That you could hold him as a glutton,
Who, when he is tired of beef,
Determines to tackle the mutton.
But this I am willing to say,
If it will appease her sorrow,
I'll marry this lady to-day,
And I'll marry the other to-morrow!

BRIDESMAIDS (*rushing forward as before*).

But this he is willing to say, etc.

RECIT.—JUDGE.

That seems a reasonable proposition,
To which, I think, your client may agree.

COUNSEL.

But, I submit, my lord, with all submission,
To marry two at once is Burglaree!

(*Referring to law book.*)

In the reign of James the Second,
It was generally reckoned
As a very serious crime
To marry two wives at one time.

(*Hands book up to* JUDGE, *who reads it.*)

ALL.

Oh, man of learning!

QUARTETTE.

JUDGE.

A nice dilemma we have here,
That calls for all our wit:

COUNSEL.

And at this stage, it don't appear
That we can settle it.

DEFENDANT (*in Witness-box*).

If I to wed the girl am loth
A breach 'twill surely be—

PLAINTIFF.

And if he goes and marries both,
It counts as Burglaree!

ALL.

A nice dilemma, etc.

DUET—PLAINTIFF *and* DEFENDANT.

PLAINTIFF (*embracing him rapturously*).

I love him—I love him—with fervour unceasing
I worship and madly adore;
My blind adoration is always increasing,
My loss I shall ever deplore.
Oh, see what a blessing, what love and caressing
I've lost, and remember it, pray,
When you I'm addressing, are busy assessing
The damages Edwin must pay!

DEFENDANT (*repelling her furiously*).

I smoke like a furnace—I'm always in liquor,
A ruffian—a bully—a sot;
I'm sure I should thrash her, perhaps I should kick her,
I am such a very bad lot!
I'm not prepossessing, as you may be guessing,
She couldn't endure me a day;
Recall my professing, when you are assessing
The damages Edwin must pay!

(*She clings to him passionately; after a struggle, he throws her off into arms of* COUNSEL.)

JURY.

We would be fairly acting,
But this is most distracting!

RECIT.—JUDGE.

The question, gentlemen—is one of liquor;
You ask for guidance—this is my reply:
He says, when tipsy, he would thrash and kick her,
Let's make him tipsy, gentlemen, and try!

COUNSEL.

With all respect
I do object!

PLAINTIFF.

I do object!

DEFENDANT.

I don't object!

ALL.

With all respect
We do object!

JUDGE (*tossing his books and papers about*).

All the legal furies seize you!
No proposal seems to please you,
I can't stop up here all day,
I must shortly go away.
Barristers, and you, attorneys,
Set out on your homeward journeys;
Gentle, simple-minded Usher,
Get you, if you like, to Russ*her*;
Put your briefs upon the shelf,
I will marry her myself!

(*He comes down from Bench to floor of Court. He embraces* ANGELINA.)

FINALE.

PLAINTIFF.

Oh, joy unbounded,
With wealth surrounded,
The knell is sounded
Of grief and woe.

COUNSEL.

With love devoted
On you he's doated.
To castle moated
Away they go.

DEFENDANT.

I wonder whether
They'll live together
In marriage tether
In manner true?

USHER.

It seems to me, sir,
Of such as she, sir,
A judge is he, sir,
And a good judge too.

JUDGE.

Yes, I am a Judge.

ALL.

And a good Judge too!

JUDGE.

Yes, I am a Judge.

ALL.

And a good Judge too!

JUDGE.

Though homeward as you trudge,
You declare my law is fudge,
Yet of beauty I'm a judge.

ALL.

And a good Judge too!

CURTAIN.

PATIENCE

OR

BUNTHORNE'S BRIDE

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COLONEL CALVERLEY
MAJOR MURGATROYD
LIEUT. THE DUKE OF DUNSTABLE } (*Officers of Dragoon Guards*).

REGINALD BUNTHORNE (*a Fleshly Poet*).

ARCHIBALD GROSVENOR (*an Idyllic Poet*).

MR. BUNTHORNE'S SOLICITOR.

THE LADY ANGELA
THE LADY SAPHIR
THE LADY ELLA
THE LADY JANE } (*Rapturous Maidens*).

PATIENCE (*a Dairy Maid*).

Chorus of Rapturous Maidens and Officers of Dragoon Guards

ACT I.—Exterior of Castle Bunthorne.

ACT II.—A Glade.

First produced at the Opéra Comique on April 23, 1881.

PATIENCE

OR

BUNTHORNE'S BRIDE

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Exterior of Castle Bunthorne. Entrance to Castle by drawbridge over moat. Young ladies dressed in æsthetic draperies are grouped about the stage. They play on lutes, mandolins, etc., as they sing, and all are in the last stage of despair.* ANGELA, ELLA, *and* SAPHIR *lead them.*

CHORUS.

Twenty love-sick maidens we,
Love-sick all against our will.
Twenty years hence we shall be
Twenty love-sick maidens still.
Twenty love-sick maidens we,
And we die for love of thee.

SOLO—ANGELA.

Love feeds on hope, they say, or love will die—
ALL. Ah, miserie!
Yet my love lives, although no hope have I!
ALL. Ah, miserie!
Alas, poor heart, go hide thyself away—
To weeping concords tune thy roundelay!
Ah, miserie!

CHORUS.

All our love is all for one,
Yet that love he heedeth not.
He is coy and cares for none,
Sad and sorry is our lot!
Ah, miserie!

SOLO—ELLA.

Go, breaking heart,
Go, dream of love requited;
Go, foolish heart,
Go, dream of lovers plighted;
Go, madcap heart,
Go, dream of never waking;
And in thy dream
Forget that thou art breaking!

CHORUS. Ah, miserie!
ELLA. Forget that thou art breaking!
CHORUS. Twenty love-sick maidens, etc.

ANG. There is a strange magic in this love of ours! Rivals as we all are in the affections of our Reginald, the very hopelessness of our love is a bond that binds us to one another!

SAPH. Jealousy is merged in misery. While he, the very cynosure of our eyes and hearts, remains icy insensible—what have we to strive for?

ELLA. The love of maidens is, to him, as interesting as the taxes!

SAPH. Would that it were! He pays his taxes.

ANG. And cherishes the receipts!

Enter LADY JANE.

SAPH. Happy receipts!

JANE (*suddenly*). Fools!

ANG. I beg your pardon?

JANE. Fools and blind! The man loves—wildly loves!

ANG. But whom? None of us!

JANE. No, none of us. His weird fancy has lighted, for the nonce, on Patience, the village milkmaid!

SAPH. On Patience? Oh, it cannot be!

JANE. Bah! But yesterday I caught him in her dairy, eating fresh butter with a tablespoon. To-day he is not well!

SAPH. But Patience boasts that she has never loved—that love is, to her, a sealed book! Oh, he cannot be serious!

JANE. 'Tis but a fleeting fancy—'twill quickly pass away. (*Aside.*) Oh, Reginald, if you but knew what a wealth of golden love is waiting for you, stored up in this rugged old bosom of mine, the milkmaid's triumph would be short indeed!

(PATIENCE *appears on an eminence. She looks down with pity on the despondent Ladies.*)

RECIT.—PATIENCE.

Still brooding on their mad infatuation!
I thank thee, Love, thou comest not to me!
Far happier I, free from thy ministration,
Than dukes or duchesses who love can be!

SAPH. (*looking up*). 'Tis Patience—happy girl! Loved by a Poet!

PA. Your pardon, ladies. I intrude upon you. (*Going.*)

ANG. Nay, pretty child, come hither. Is it true
That you have never loved?

PA. Most true indeed.

SOPRANOS. Most marvellous!

CONTRALTOS. And most deplorable!

SONG—PATIENCE.

I cannot tell what this love may be
That cometh to all, but not to me.
It cannot be kind as they'd imply,
Or why do these ladies sigh?

It cannot be joy and rapture deep,
Or why do these gentle ladies weep ?
It cannot be blissful as 'tis said,
Or why are their eyes so wondrous red ?

Though everywhere true love I see
A-coming to all, but not to me,
I cannot tell what this love may be !
For I am blithe and I am gay,
While they sit sighing night and day
Think of the gulf 'twixt them and me,
" Fal la la la ! "—and " Miserie ! "

CHORUS. Yes, she is blithe, etc.

PA. If love is a thorn, they show no wit
Who foolishly hug and foster it.
If love is a weed, how simple they
Who gather it, day by day !
If love is a nettle that makes you smart,
Then why do you wear it next your heart ?
And if it be none of these, say I,
Ah, why do you sit and sob and sigh ?
Though everywhere, etc.

CHORUS. For she is blithe, etc.

ANG. Ah, Patience, if you have never loved, you have never known true happiness ! (*All sigh.*)

PA. But the truly happy always seem to have so much on their minds. The truly happy never seem quite well.

JANE. There is a transcendentality of delirium—an acute accentuation of supremest ecstasy—which the earthy might easily mistake for indigestion. But it is *not* indigestion—it is æsthetic transfiguration ! (*To the others.*) Enough of babble. Come !

PA. But stay, I have some news for you. The 35th Dragoon Guards have halted in the village, and are even now on their way to this very spot.

ANG. The 35th Dragoon Guards !

SAPH. They are fleshly men, of full habit !

ELLA. We care nothing for Dragoon Guards!

PA. But, bless me, you were all engaged to them a year ago!

SAPH. A year ago!

ANG. My poor child, you don't understand these things. A year ago they were very well in our eyes, but since then our tastes have been etherealized, our perceptions exalted. (*To others.*) Come, it is time to lift up our voices in morning carol to our Reginald. Let us to his door.

[*The Ladies go off, two and two, into the Castle, singing refrain of "Twenty love-sick maidens we", and accompanying themselves on harps and mandolins.* PATIENCE *watches them in surprise, as she climbs the rock by which she entered.*

March. Enter Officers of Dragoon Guards, led by MAJOR.

CHORUS OF DRAGOONS.

The soldiers of our Queen
Are linked in friendly tether;
Upon the battle scene
They fight the foe together.
There every mother's son
Prepared to fight and fall is;
The enemy of one
The enemy of all is!

Enter COLONEL.

SONG—COLONEL.

If you want a receipt for that popular mystery,
Known to the world as a Heavy Dragoon,
Take all the remarkable people in history,
Rattle them off to a popular tune.
The pluck of Lord Nelson on board of the *Victory*—
Genius of Bismarck devising a plan—
The humour of Fielding (which sounds contradictory)—
Coolness of Paget about to trepan—

The science of Jullien, the eminent musico—
Wit of Macaulay, who wrote of Queen Anne—
The pathos of Paddy, as rendered by Boucicault—
Style of the Bishop of Sodor and Man—
The dash of a D'Orsay, divested of quackery—
Narrative powers of Dickens and Thackeray—
Victor Emmanuel—peak-haunting Peveril—
Thomas Aquinas, and Doctor Sacheverell—
Tupper and Tennyson—Daniel Defoe—
Anthony Trollope and Mr. Guizot!
Take of these elements all that is fusible,
Melt them all down in a pipkin or crucible,
Set them to simmer and take off the scum,
And a Heavy Dragoon is the residuum!

CHORUS. Yes! yes! yes! yes!
A Heavy Dragoon is the residuum!

COL. If you want a receipt for this soldier-like paragon,
Get at the wealth of the Czar (if you can)—
The family pride of a Spaniard from Arragon—
Force of Mephisto pronouncing a ban—
A smack of Lord Waterford, reckless and rollicky—
Swagger of Roderick, heading his clan—
The keen penetration of Paddington Pollaky—
Grace of an Odalisque on a divan—
The genius strategic of Cæsar or Hannibal—
Skill of Sir Garnet in thrashing a cannibal—
Flavour of Hamlet—the Stranger, a touch of him—
Little of Manfred (but not very much of him)—
Beadle of Burlington—Richardson's show—
Mr Micawber and Madame Tussaud!
Take of these elements all that is fusible,
Melt them all down in a pipkin or crucible,
Set them to simmer and take off the scum,
And a Heavy Dragoon is the residuum!

ALL. Yes! yes! yes! yes!
A Heavy Dragoon is the residuum!

COL. Well, here we are once more on the scene of our former triumphs. But where's the Duke?

Enter DUKE, *listlessly, and in low spirits.*

DUKE. Here I am! (*Sighs.*)

COL. Come, cheer up, don't give way!

DUKE. Oh, for that, I'm as cheerful as a poor devil can be expected to be who has the misfortune to be a duke, with a thousand a day!

MAJ. Humph! Most men would envy you!

DUKE. Envy *me*? Tell me, Major, are you fond of toffee?

MAJ. Very!

COL. We are all fond of toffee.

ALL. We are!

DUKE. Yes, and toffee in moderation is a capital thing. But to *live* on toffee—toffee for breakfast, toffee for dinner, toffee for tea—to have it supposed that you care for nothing *but* toffee, and that you would consider yourself insulted if anything but toffee were offered to you—how would you like *that*?

COL. I can quite believe that, under those circumstances, even toffee would become monotonous.

DUKE. For "toffee" read flattery, adulation, and abject deference, carried to such a pitch that I began, at last, to think that man was born bent at an angle of forty-five degrees! Great Heavens, what is there to adulate in me! Am I particularly intelligent, or remarkably studious, or excruciatingly witty, or unusually accomplished, or exceptionally virtuous?

COL. You're about as commonplace a young man as ever I saw.

ALL. You are!

DUKE. Exactly! That's it exactly! That describes me to a T! Thank you all very much! Well, I couldn't stand it any longer, so I joined this second-class cavalry regiment. In the Army, thought I, I shall be occasionally snubbed, perhaps even bullied, who knows? The thought was rapture, and here I am.

COL. (*looking off*). Yes, and here are the ladies!
DUKE. But who is the gentleman with the long hair?
COL. I don't know.
DUKE. He seems popular!
COL. He *does* seem popular!

BUNTHORNE *enters, followed by Ladies, two and two, singing and playing on harps as before. He is composing a poem, and quite absorbed. He sees no one, but walks across the stage, followed by Ladies. They take no notice of Dragoons — to the surprise and indignation of those Officers.*

CHORUS OF LADIES.

In a doleful train
Two and two we walk all day—
For we love in vain!
None so sorrowful as they
Who can only sigh and say,
Woe is me, alackaday!

CHORUS OF DRAGOONS.

Now is not this ridiculous—and is not this preposterous?
A thorough-paced absurdity—explain it if you can.
Instead of rushing eagerly to cherish us and foster us,
They all prefer this melancholy literary man.
Instead of slyly peering at us,
Casting looks endearing at us,
Blushing at us, flushing at us—flirting with a fan;
They're actually sneering at us, fleering at us, jeering at us!
Pretty sort of treatment for a military man!
Pretty sort of treatment for a military man!

ANG. Mystic poet, hear our prayer,
Twenty love-sick maidens we—
Young and wealthy, dark and fair—
All of county family.
And we die for love of thee—
Twenty love-sick maidens we!

CHORUS OF LADIES. Yes, we die for love of thee—
Twenty love-sick maidens we!

BUN. (*aside—slyly*). Though my book I seem to scan
In a rapt ecstatic way,
Like a literary man
Who despises female clay,
I hear plainly all they say,
Twenty love-sick maidens they!

OFFICERS (*to each other*). He hears plainly, etc.

SAPH. Though so excellently wise,
For a moment mortal be,
Deign to raise thy purple eyes
From thy heart-drawn poesy.
Twenty love-sick maidens see—
Each is kneeling on her knee! (*All kneel.*)

CHORUS OF LADIES. Twenty love-sick, etc.

BUN. (*aside*). Though, as I remarked before,
Any one convinced would be
That some transcendental lore
Is monopolizing me,
Round the corner I can see
Each is kneeling on her knee!

OFFICERS (*to each other*). Round the corner, etc.

ENSEMBLE.

OFFICERS.	LADIES.
Now is not this ridiculous, etc.	Mystic poet, hear our prayer, etc.

COL. Angela! what is the meaning of this?

ANG. Oh, sir, leave us; our minds are but ill-tuned to light love-talk.

MAJ. But what in the world has come over you all?

JANE. Bunthorne! *He* has come over us. He has come among us, and he has idealized us.

DUKE. Has he succeeded in idealizing *you*?

JANE. He has!

DUKE. Good old Bunthorne!

JANE. My eyes are open; I droop despairingly; I am soulfully intense; I am limp and I cling!

(*During this* BUNTHORNE *is seen in all the agonies of composition. The Ladies are watching him intently as he writhes. At last he hits on the word he wants and writes it down. A general sense of relief.*)

BUN. Finished! At last! Finished!

(*He staggers, overcome with the mental strain, into arms of* COLONEL.)

COL. Are you better now?

BUN. Yes—oh, it's you—I am better now. The poem is finished, and my soul had gone out into it. That was all. It was nothing worth mentioning, it occurs three times a day. (*Sees* PATIENCE, *who has entered during this scene.*) Ah, Patience! Dear Patience! (*Holds her hand; she seems frightened.*)

ANG. Will it please you read it to us, sir?

SAPH. This we supplicate. (*All kneel.*)

BUN. Shall I?

ALL THE DRAGOONS. No!

BUN. (*annoyed—to* PATIENCE). I will read it if *you* bid me!

PA. (*much frightened*). You can if you like!

BUN. It is a wild, weird, fleshly thing; yet very tender, very yearning, very precious. It is called, "Oh, Hollow! Hollow! Hollow!"

PA. Is it a hunting song?

BUN. A hunting song? No, it is *not* a hunting song. It is the wail of the poet's heart on discovering that everything is commonplace. To understand it, cling passionately to one another and think of faint lilies. (*They do so as he recites*)—

"OH, HOLLOW! HOLLOW! HOLLOW!"

What time the poet hath hymned
The writhing maid, lithe-limbed,
Quivering on amaranthine asphodel,
How can he paint her woes,
Knowing, as well he knows,
That all can be set right with calomel?

When from the poet's plinth
The amorous colocynth
Yearns for the aloe, faint with rapturous thrills,
How can he hymn their throes
Knowing, as well he knows,
That they are only uncompounded pills?

Is it, and can it be,
Nature hath this decree,
Nothing poetic in the world shall dwell?
Or that in all her works
Something poetic lurks,
Even in colocynth and calomel?
I cannot tell.

[*Exit* BUNTHORNE.

ANG. How purely fragrant!

SAPH. How earnestly precious!

PA. Well, it seems to me to be nonsense.

SAPH. Nonsense, yes, perhaps—but oh, what precious nonsense!

COL. This is all very well, but you seem to forget that you are engaged to us.

SAPH. It can never be. You are not Empyrean. You are not Della Cruscan. You are not even Early English. Oh, be Early English ere it is too late! (*Officers look at each other in astonishment.*)

JANE (*looking at uniform*). Red and Yellow! Primary colours! Oh, South Kensington!

DUKE. We didn't design our uniforms, but we don't see how they could be improved.

JANE. No, you wouldn't. Still, there *is* a cobwebby

grey velvet, with a tender bloom like cold gravy, which, made Florentine fourteenth-century, trimmed with Venetian leather and Spanish altar lace, and surmounted with something Japanese—it matters not what—would at least be Early English! Come, maidens.

[*Exeunt Maidens, two and two, singing refrain of "Twenty love-sick maidens we". The Officers watch them off in astonishment.*

DUKE. Gentlemen, this is an insult to the British uniform——

COL. A uniform that has been as successful in the courts of Venus as on the field of Mars!

SONG—COLONEL.

When I first put this uniform on,
I said, as I looked in the glass,
"It's one to a million
That any civilian
My figure and form will surpass.
Gold lace has a charm for the fair,
And I've plenty of that, and to spare,
While a lover's professions,
When uttered in Hessians,
Are eloquent everywhere!"
A fact that I counted upon,
When I first put this uniform on!

CHORUS OF DRAGOONS.

By a simple coincidence, few
Could ever have counted upon,
The same thing occurred to me, too,
When I first put this uniform on!

COL. I said, when I first put it on,
"It is plain to the veriest dunce
That every beauty
Will feel it her duty
To yield to its glamour at once.

They will see that I'm freely gold-laced
In a uniform handsome and chaste "—
But the peripatetics
Of long-haired æsthetics
Are very much more to their taste—
Which I never counted upon,
When I first put this uniform on!

CHORUS. By a simple coincidence, few
Could ever have reckoned upon,
I didn't anticipate that,
When I first put this uniform on!

[*The Dragoons go off angrily.*

Enter BUNTHORNE, *who changes his manner and becomes intensely melodramatic.*

RECIT. AND SONG—BUNTHORNE.

Am I alone,
And unobserved? I am!
Then let me own
I'm an æsthetic sham!
This air severe
Is but a mere
Veneer!
This cynic smile
Is but a wile
Of guile!
This costume chaste
Is but good taste
Misplaced!

Let me confess!
A languid love for lilies does *not* blight me!
Lank limbs and haggard cheeks do *not* delight me!
I do *not* care for dirty greens
By any means.

I do *not* long for all one sees
That's Japanese.
I am *not* fond of uttering platitudes
In stained-glass attitudes.
In short, my mediævalism's affectation,
Born of a morbid love of admiration!

SONG.

If you're anxious for to shine in the high æsthetic line as a man of culture rare,
You must get up all the germs of the transcendental terms, and plant them everywhere.
You must lie upon the daisies and discourse in novel phrases of your complicated state of mind,
The meaning doesn't matter if it's only idle chatter of a transcendental kind.
And every one will say,
As you walk your mystic way,
"If this young man expresses himself in terms too deep for *me*,
Why, what a very singularly deep young man this deep young man must be!"

Be eloquent in praise of the very dull old days which have long since passed away,
And convince 'em, if you can, that the reign of good Queen Anne was Culture's palmiest day.
Of course you will pooh-pooh whatever's fresh and new, and declare it's crude and mean,
For Art stopped short in the cultivated court of the Empress Josephine.
And every one will say,
As you walk your mystic way,
"If that's not good enough for him which is good enough for *me*,
Why, what a very cultivated kind of youth this kind of youth must be!"

Then a sentimental passion of a vegetable fashion must
excite your languid spleen,
An attachment *à la* Plato for a bashful young potato, or
a not-too-French French bean!
Though the Philistines may jostle, you will rank as an
apostle in the high æsthetic band,
If you walk down Piccadilly with a poppy or a lily in
your mediæval hand.
And every one will say,
As you walk your flowery way,
"If he's content with a vegetable love which would
certainly not suit *me*,
Why, what a most particularly pure young man this pure
young man must be!"

At the end of his song PATIENCE *enters. He sees her.*

BUN. Ah! Patience, come hither. I am pleased with thee. The bitter-hearted one, who finds all else hollow, is pleased with thee. For you are not hollow. *Are* you?

PA. No, thanks, I have dined; but—I beg your pardon—I interrupt you.

BUN. Life is made up of interruptions. The tortured soul, yearning for solitude, writhes under them. Oh, but my heart is a-weary! Oh, I am a cursed thing! Don't go.

PA. Really, I'm very sorry——

BUN. Tell me, girl, do you ever yearn?

PA. (*misunderstanding him*). I earn my living.

BUN. (*impatiently*). No, no! Do you know what it is to be heart-hungry? Do you know what it is to yearn for the Indefinable, and yet to be brought face to face, daily, with the Multiplication Table? Do you know what it is to seek oceans and to find puddles?—to long for whirlwinds and yet to have to do the best you can with the bellows? That's my case. Oh, I am a cursed thing! Don't go.

PA. If you please, I don't understand you—you frighten me!

BUN. Don't be frightened—it's only poetry.

PA. Well, if that's poetry, I don't like poetry.

BUN. (*eagerly*). Don't you? (*Aside.*) Can I trust her? (*Aloud.*) Patience, you don't like poetry—well, between you and me, *I* don't like poetry. It's hollow, unsubstantial—unsatisfactory. What's the use of yearning for Elysian Fields when you know you can't get 'em, and would only let 'em out on building leases if you had 'em?

PA. Sir, I——

BUN. Patience, I have long loved you. Let me tell you a secret. I am not as bilious as I look. If you like, I will cut my hair. There is more innocent fun within me than a casual spectator would imagine. You have never seen me frolicsome. Be a good girl—a very good girl—and one day you shall. If you are fond of touch-and-go jocularity—this is the shop for it.

PA. Sir, I will speak plainly. In the matter of love I am untaught. I have never loved but my great-aunt. But I am quite certain that, under any circumstances, I couldn't possibly love *you*.

BUN. Oh, you think not?

PA. I'm quite sure of it. Quite sure. Quite.

BUN. Very good. Life is henceforth a blank. I don't care what becomes of me. I have only to ask that you will not abuse my confidence; though *you* despise me, I am extremely popular with the other young ladies.

PA. I only ask that you will leave me and never renew the subject.

BUN. Certainly. Broken-hearted and desolate, I go. (*Recites.*)

"Oh, to be wafted away
From this black Aceldama of sorrow,
Where the dust of an earthy to-day
Is the earth of a dusty to-morrow!"

It is a little thing of my own. I call it "Heart Foam". I shall not publish it. Farewell! Patience, Patience, farewell!

[*Exit* BUNTHORNE.

PA. What on earth does it all mean? Why does he love me? Why does he expect me to love him? He's not a relation! It frightens me!

Enter ANGELA.

ANG. Why, Patience, what is the matter?

PA. Lady Angela, tell me two things. Firstly, what on earth is this love that upsets everybody; and, secondly, how is it to be distinguished from insanity?

ANG. Poor blind child! Oh, forgive her, Eros! Why, love is of all passions the most essential! It is the embodiment of purity, the abstraction of refinement! It is the one unselfish emotion in this whirlpool of grasping greed!

PA. Oh, dear, oh! (*Beginning to cry.*)

ANG. Why are you crying?

PA. To think that I have lived all these years without having experienced this ennobling and unselfish passion! Why, what a wicked girl I must be! For it *is* unselfish, isn't it?

ANG. Absolutely! Love that is tainted with selfishness is no love. Oh, try, try, try to love! It really isn't difficult if you give your whole mind to it.

PA. I'll set about it at once. I won't go to bed until I'm head over ears in love with somebody.

ANG. Noble girl! But is it possible that you have never loved anybody?

PA. Yes, one.

ANG. Ah! Whom?

PA. My great-aunt——

ANG. Great-aunts don't count.

PA. Then there's nobody. At least—no, nobody. Not since I was a baby. But *that* doesn't count, I suppose.

ANG. I don't know. Tell me all about it.

DUET—PATIENCE *and* ANGELA.

Long years ago—fourteen, maybe—
When but a tiny babe of four,
Another baby played with me,
My elder by a year or more;

A little child of beauty rare,
With marvellous eyes and wondrous hair,
Who, in my child-eyes, seemed to me
All that a little child should be!
Ah, how we loved, that child and I!
How pure our baby joy!
How true our love—and, by the by,
He was a little boy!

ANG. Ah, old, old tale of Cupid's touch!
I thought as much—I thought as much!
He *was* a little boy!

PA. (*shocked*). Pray don't misconstrue what I say—
Remember, pray—remember, pray,
He was a *little* boy!

ANG. No doubt! Yet, spite of all your pains,
The interesting fact remains—
He was a little *boy*!

ENSEMBLE. { Ah, yes, in / No doubt! Yet, } spite of all { my / your } pains, etc.

[*Exit* ANGELA.

PA. It's perfectly dreadful to think of the appalling state I must be in! I had no idea that love was a duty. No wonder they all look so unhappy! Upon my word, I hardly like to associate with myself. I don't think I'm respectable. I'll go at once and fall in love with—— (*Enter* GROSVENOR.) A stranger!

DUET—PATIENCE *and* GROSVENOR.

GROS. Prithee, pretty maiden—prithee, tell me true,
(Hey, but I'm doleful, willow willow waly!)
Have you e'er a lover a-dangling after you?
Hey willow waly O!
I would fain discover
If you have a lover?
Hey willow waly O!

PA. Gentle sir, my heart is frolicsome and free—
(Hey, but he's doleful, willow willow waly !)
Nobody I care for comes a-courting me—
Hey willow waly O !
Nobody I care for
Comes a-courting—therefore,
Hey willow waly O !

GROS. Prithee, pretty maiden, will you marry me ?
(Hey, but I'm hopeful, willow willow waly !)
I may say, at once, I'm a man of propertee—
Hey willow waly O !
Money, I despise it ;
Many people prize it,
Hey willow waly O !

PA. Gentle sir, although to marry I design—
(Hey, but he's hopeful, willow willow waly !)
As yet I do not know you, and so I must decline.
Hey willow waly O !
To other maidens go you—
As yet I do not know you,
Hey willow waly O !

GROS. Patience ! Can it be that you don't recognise me ?

PA. Recognise you ? No, indeed I don't !

GROS. Have fifteen years so greatly changed me ?

PA. Fifteen years ? What do you mean ?

GROS. Have you forgotten the friend of your youth, your Archibald ?—your little playfellow ? Oh, Chronos, Chronos, this is too bad of you !

PA. Archibald ! Is it possible ? Why, let me look ! It is ! It is ! It must be ! Oh, how happy I am ! I thought we should never meet again ! And how you've grown !

GROS. Yes, Patience, I am much taller and much stouter than I was.

PA. And how you've improved !

GROS. Yes, Patience, I am very beautiful! (*Sighs.*)

PA. But surely *that* doesn't make you unhappy?

GROS. Yes, Patience. Gifted as I am with a beauty which probably has not its rival on earth, I am, nevertheless, utterly and completely miserable.

PA. Oh—but why?

GROS. My child-love for you has never faded. Conceive, then, the horror of my situation when I tell you that it is my hideous destiny to be madly loved at first sight by every woman I come across!

PA. But why do you make yourself so picturesque? Why not disguise yourself, disfigure yourself, anything to escape this persecution?

GROS. No, Patience, that may not be. These gifts—irksome as they are—were given to me for the enjoyment and delectation of my fellow-creatures. I am a trustee for Beauty, and it is my duty to see that the conditions of my trust are faithfully discharged.

PA. And you, too, are a Poet?

GROS. Yes, I am the Apostle of Simplicity. I am called "Archibald the All-Right"—for I am infallible!

PA. And is it possible that you condescend to love such a girl as I?

GROS. Yes, Patience, is it not strange? I have loved you with a Florentine fourteenth-century frenzy for full fifteen years!

PA. Oh, marvellous! I have hitherto been deaf to the voice of love. I seem now to know what love is! It has been revealed to me—it is Archibald Grosvenor!

GROS. Yes, Patience, it is!

PA. (*as in a trance*). We will never, never part!

GROS. We will live and die together!

PA. I swear it!

GROS. We both swear it!

PA. (*recoiling from him*). But—oh, horror!

GROS. What's the matter?

PA. Why, you are perfection! A source of endless ecstasy to all who know you!

GROS. I know I am. Well?

PA. Then, bless my heart, there can be nothing unselfish in loving *you*!

GROS. Merciful powers! I never thought of that!

PA. To monopolize those features on which all women love to linger! It would be unpardonable!

GROS. Why, so it would! Oh, fatal perfection, again you interpose between me and my happiness!

PA. Oh, if you were but a thought less beautiful than you are!

GROS. Would that I were; but candour compels me to admit that I'm not!

PA. Our duty is clear; we must part, and for ever!

GROS. Oh, misery! And yet I cannot question the propriety of your decision. Farewell, Patience!

PA. Farewell, Archibald! But stay!

GROS. Yes, Patience?

PA. Although I may not love *you*—for you are perfection—there is nothing to prevent your loving *me*. I am plain, homely, unattractive!

GROS. Why, that's true!

PA. The love of such a man as you for such a girl as I must be unselfish!

GROS. Unselfishness itself!

DUET—PATIENCE *and* GROSVENOR.

PA. Though to marry you would very selfish be—
GROS. Hey, but I'm doleful—willow willow waly!
PA. You may, all the same, continue loving me—
GROS. Hey willow waly O!
BOTH. All the world ignoring,
You'll / I'll } go on adoring—
Hey willow waly O!

[*At the end, exeunt despairingly, in opposite directions.*

FINALE—Act I.

Enter Bunthorne, *crowned with roses and hung about with garlands, and looking very miserable. He is led by* Angela *and* Saphir (*each of whom holds an end of the rose-garland by which he is bound*), *and accompanied by procession of Maidens. They are dancing classically, and playing on cymbals, double pipes, and other archaic instruments.*

Chorus.

Let the merry cymbals sound,
Gaily pipe Pandæan pleasure,
With a Daphnephoric bound
Tread a gay but classic measure.
Every heart with hope is beating,
For at this exciting meeting
Fickle Fortune will decide
Who shall be our Bunthorne's bride!

Enter Dragoons, led by Colonel, Major, *and* Duke. *They are surprised at proceedings.*

Chorus of Dragoons.

Now tell us, we pray you,
Why thus they array you—
Oh, poet, how say you—
What is it you've done?

Duke. Of rite sacrificial,
By sentence judicial,
This seems the initial,
Then why don't you run?

Col. They cannot have led you
To hang or behead you,
Nor may they *all* wed you,
Unfortunate one!

CHORUS OF DRAGOONS.

Then tell us, we pray you,
Why thus they array you—
Oh, poet, how say you—
What is it you've done?

RECIT.—BUNTHORNE.

Heart-broken at my Patience's barbarity,
By the advice of my solicitor (*introducing his Solicitor*),
In aid—in aid of a deserving charity,
I've put myself up to be raffled for!

MAIDENS. By the advice of his solicitor
He's put himself up to be raffled for!

DRAGOONS. Oh, horror! urged by his solicitor,
He's put himself up to be raffled for!

MAIDENS. Oh, heaven's blessing on his solicitor!

DRAGOONS. A hideous curse on his solicitor!

[*The* SOLICITOR, *horrified at the Dragoons' curse, rushes off.*

COL. Stay, we implore you,
Before our hopes are blighted;
You see before you
The men to whom you're plighted!

CHORUS OF DRAGOONS.

Stay we implore you,
For we adore you;
To us you're plighted
To be united—
Stay, we implore you!

SOLO—DUKE.

Your maiden hearts, ah, do not steel
To pity's eloquent appeal,
Such conduct British soldiers feel.
(*Aside to Dragoons.*) Sigh, sigh, all sigh!
(*They all sigh.*)

To foeman's steel we rarely see
A British soldier bend the knee,
Yet, one and all, they kneel to ye—
(*Aside to Dragoons.*) Kneel, kneel, all kneel!

(*They all kneel.*)

Our soldiers very seldom cry,
And yet—I need not tell you why—
A tear-drop dews each martial eye!
(*Aside to Dragoons.*) Weep, weep, all weep!

(*They all weep.*)

ENSEMBLE.

Our soldiers very seldom cry,
And yet—I need not tell you why—
A tear-drop dews each manly eye!
Weep, weep, all weep!

BUNTHORNE (*who has been impatient during this appeal*).

Come, walk up, and purchase with avidity,
Overcome your diffidence and natural timidity,
Tickets for the raffle should be purchased with avidity,
Put in half a guinea and a husband you may gain—
Such a judge of blue-and-white and other kinds of pottery—
From early Oriental down to modern terra-cotta-ry—
Put in half a guinea—you may draw him in a lottery—
Such an opportunity may not occur again.

CHORUS. Such a judge of blue-and-white, etc.

(*Maidens crowd up to purchase tickets; during this Dragoons dance in single file round stage, to express their indifference.*)

DRAGOONS. We've been thrown over, we're aware,
But we don't care—but we don't care!
There's fish in the sea, no doubt of it,
As good as ever came out of it,
And some day we shall get our share,
So we don't care—so we don't care!

During this the Maidens have been buying tickets. At last JANE *presents herself.* BUNTHORNE *looks at her with aversion.*

RECIT.

BUN. And are *you* going a ticket for to buy ?
JANE (*surprised*). Most certainly I am ; why shouldn't I ?
BUN. (*aside*). Oh, Fortune, this is hard ! (*Aloud.*)
Blindfold your eyes ;
Two minutes will decide who wins the prize ! (*Maidens blindfold themselves.*)

CHORUS OF MAIDENS.

Oh, Fortune, to my aching heart be kind !
Like us, thou art blindfolded, but not blind ! (*Each uncovers one eye.*)
Just raise your bandage, thus, that you may see,
And give the prize, and give the prize to me ! (*They cover their eyes again.*)

BUN. Come, Lady Jane, I pray you draw the first !
JANE (*joyfully*). He loves me best !
BUN. (*aside*). I want to know the worst !

JANE *puts hand in bag to draw ticket.* PATIENCE *enters and prevents her doing so.*

PA. Hold ! Stay your hand !
ALL (*uncovering their eyes*). What means this interference ?
Of this bold girl I pray you make a clearance !
JANE. Away with you, and to your milk-pails go !
BUN. (*suddenly*). She wants a ticket ! Take a dozen !
PA. No !

SOLO—PATIENCE (*kneeling to* BUNTHORNE).

If there be pardon in your breast
For this poor penitent,
Who, with remorseful thought opprest,
Sincerely doth repent ;

If you, with one so lowly, still
Desire to be allied,
Then you may take me, if you will,
For I will be your bride!

ALL. Oh, shameless one!
Oh, bold-faced thing!
Away you run,
Go, take you wing,
You shameless one!
You bold-faced thing!

BUN. How strong is love! For many and many a week
She's loved me fondly and has feared to speak,
But Nature, for restraint too mighty far,
Has burst the bonds of Art—and here we are!

PA. No, Mr. Bunthorne, no—you're wrong again;
Permit me—I'll endeavour to explain!

SONG—PATIENCE.

PA. True love must single-hearted be—
BUN. Exactly so!
PA. From every selfish fancy free—
BUN. Exactly so!
PA. No idle thought of gain or joy
A maiden's fancy should employ—
True love must be without alloy.
ALL. Exactly so!

PA. Imposture to contempt must lead—
COL. Exactly so!
PA. Blind vanity's dissension's seed—
MAJ. Exactly so!
PA. It follows, then, a maiden who
Devotes herself to loving *you* (*indicating* BUNTHORNE)
Is prompted by no selfish view—
ALL. Exactly so!

SAPH. Are you resolved to wed this shameless one?
ANG. Is there no chance for any other?
BUN. (*decisively*). None! (*Embraces* PATIENCE.)

[*Exeunt* PATIENCE *and* BUNTHORNE.

(ANGELA, SAPHIR, *and* ELLA *take* COLONEL, DUKE, *and* MAJOR *down, while Girls gaze fondly at other Officers.*)

SESTETTE.

I hear the soft note of the echoing voice
Of an old, old love, long dead—
It whispers my sorrowing heart "rejoice"—
For the last sad tear is shed—
The pain that is all but a pleasure will change
For the pleasure that's all but pain,
And never, oh never, this heart will range
From that old, old love again!

(*Girls embrace Officers.*)

CHORUS. Yes, the pain that is all, etc. (*Embrace.*)

Enter PATIENCE *and* BUNTHORNE.

As the Dragoons and Girls are embracing, enter GROSVENOR, *reading. He takes no notice of them, but comes slowly down, still reading. The Girls are all strangely fascinated by him, and gradually withdraw from Dragoons.*

ANG. But who is this, whose god-like grace
Proclaims he comes of noble race?
And who is this, whose manly face
Bears sorrow's interesting trace?

ENSEMBLE—TUTTI.

Yes, who is this, etc.

GROS. I am a broken-hearted troubadour,
Whose mind's æsthetic and whose tastes are pure!
ANG. Æsthetic! He is æsthetic!

GROS. Yes, yes—I am æsthetic
And poetic!

ALL THE LADIES. Then, we love you!

(*The Girls leave Dragoons and group, kneeling, around* GROSVENOR. *Fury of* BUNTHORNE, *who recognizes a rival.*)

DRAGOONS. They love him! Horror!
BUN. *and* PA. They love him! Horror!
GROS. They love me! Horror! Horror! Horror!

ENSEMBLE—TUTTI.

GIRLS.

Oh, list while we a love confess
That words imperfectly express.
Those shell-like ears, ah, do not close
To blighted love's distracting woes!

GROSVENOR.

Again my cursed comeliness
Spreads hopeless anguish and distress!
Thine ears, oh Fortune, do not close
To my intolerable woes.

PATIENCE.

List, Reginald, while I confess
A love that's all unselfishness;
That it's unselfish, goodness knows,
You won't dispute it, I suppose?

BUNTHORNE.

My jealousy I can't express,
Their love they openly confess;
His shell-like ears he does not close
To their recital of their woes.

DRAGOONS. Now is not this ridiculous, etc.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*A glade.* JANE *is discovered leaning on a violoncello, upon which she presently accompanies herself. Chorus of Maidens are heard singing in the distance.*

JANE. The fickle crew have deserted Reginald and sworn allegiance to his rival, and all, forsooth, because he has glanced with passing favour on a puling milkmaid! Fools! of that fancy he will soon weary—and then I, who alone am faithful to him, shall reap my reward. But do not dally too long, Reginald, for my charms are ripe, Reginald, and already they are decaying. Better secure me ere I have gone too far!

RECIT.—JANE.

Sad is that woman's lot who, year by year,
Sees, one by one, her beauties disappear,
When Time, grown weary of her heart-drawn sighs,
Impatiently begins to " dim her eyes "!
Compelled, at last, in life's uncertain gloamings,
To wreathe her wrinkled brow with well-saved
" combings ",
Reduced, with rouge, lip-salve, and pearly grey,
To " make up " for lost time as best she may!

SONG—JANE.

Silvered is the raven hair,
Spreading is the parting straight,
Mottled the complexion fair,
Halting is the youthful gait,

Hollow is the laughter free,
Spectacled the limpid eye—
Little will be left of me
In the coming by and by!

Fading is the taper waist,
Shapeless grows the shapely limb,
And although severely laced,
Spreading is the figure trim!
Stouter than I used to be,
Still more corpulent grow I—
There will be too much of me
In the coming by and by!

[*Exit* JANE.

Enter GROSVENOR, *followed by Maidens, two and two, each playing on an archaic instrument, as in Act I. He is reading abstractedly, as* BUNTHORNE *did in Act I., and pays no attention to them.*

CHORUS OF MAIDENS.

Turn, oh, turn in this direction,
Shed, oh, shed a gentle smile,
With a glance of sad perfection
Our poor fainting hearts beguile!
On such eyes as maidens cherish
Let thy fond adorers gaze,
Or incontinently perish
In their all-consuming rays!

(*He sits—they group around him.*)

GROS. (*aside*). The old, old tale. How rapturously these maidens love me, and how hopelessly! Oh, Patience, Patience, with the love of thee in my heart, what have I for these poor mad maidens but an unvalued pity? Alas, they will die of hopeless love for me, as I shall die of hopeless love for thee!

ANG. Sir, will it please you read to us?

GROS. (*sighing*). Yes, child, if you will. What shall I read?

ANG. One of your own poems.

GROS. One of my own poems? Better not, my child. *They* will not cure thee of thy love.

ELLA. Mr. Bunthorne used to read us a poem of his own every day.

SAPH. And, to do him justice, he read them extremely well.

GROS. Oh, did he so? Well, who am I that I should take upon myself to withhold my gifts from you? What am I but a trustee? Here is a decalet—a pure and simple thing, a very daisy—a babe might understand it. To appreciate it, it is not necessary to think of anything at all.

ANG. Let us think of nothing at all!

GROSVENOR *recites.*

Gentle Jane was good as gold,
She always did as she was told;
She never spoke when her mouth was full,
Or caught bluebottles their legs to pull,
Or spilt plum jam on her nice new frock,
Or put white mice in the eight-day clock,
Or vivisected her last new doll,
Or fostered a passion for alcohol.
And when she grew up she was given in marriage
To a first-class earl who keeps his carriage!

GROS. I believe I am right in saying that there is not one word in that decalet which is calculated to bring the blush of shame to the cheek of modesty.

ANG. Not one; it is purity itself.

GROS. Here's another.

Teasing Tom was a very bad boy,
A great big squirt was his favourite toy;
He put live shrimps in his father's boots,
And sewed up the sleeves of his Sunday suits;

He punched his poor little sisters' heads,
And cayenne-peppered their four-post beds,
He plastered their hair with cobbler's wax,
And dropped hot halfpennies down their backs.
The consequence was he was lost totally,
And married a girl in the *corps de bally*!

ANG. Marked you how grandly—how relentlessly—the damning catalogue of crime strode on, till Retribution, like a poisèd hawk, came swooping down upon the Wrong-Doer? Oh, it was terrible!

ELLA. Oh, sir, you are indeed a true poet, for you touch our hearts, and they go out to you!

GROS. (*aside*). This is simply cloying. (*Aloud.*) Ladies, I am sorry to appear ungallant, but this is Saturday, and you have been following me about ever since Monday. I should like the usual half-holiday. I shall take it as a personal favour if you will kindly allow me to close early to-day.

SAPH. Oh, sir, do not send us from you!

GROS. Poor, poor girls! It is best to speak plainly. I know that I am loved by you, but I never can love you in return, for my heart is fixed elsewhere! Remember the fable of the Magnet and the Churn.

ANG. (*wildly*). But we don't know the fable of the Magnet and the Churn!

GROS. Don't you? Then I will sing it to you.

SONG—GROSVENOR.

A magnet hung in a hardware shop,
And all around was a loving crop
Of scissors and needles, nails and knives,
Offering love for all their lives;
But for iron the magnet felt no whim,
Though he charmed iron, it charmed not him;
From needles and nails and knives he'd turn,
For he'd set his love on a Silver Churn!

ALL. A Silver Churn?

GROS. A Silver Churn!

His most æsthetic,
Very magnetic
Fancy took this turn—
"If I can wheedle
A knife or a needle,
Why not a Silver Churn?"

CHORUS. His most æsthetic, etc.

GROS. And Iron and Steel expressed surprise,
The needles opened their well-drilled eyes,
The penknives felt "shut up", no doubt,
The scissors declared themselves "cut out",
The kettles they boiled with rage, 'tis said,
While every nail went off its head,
And hither and thither began to roam,
Till a hammer came up—and drove them home.

ALL. It drove them home?
GROS. It drove them home!

While this magnetic,
Peripatetic
Lover he lived to learn,
By no endeavour
Can magnet ever
Attract a Silver Churn!

ALL. While this magnetic, etc.

[*They go off in low spirits, gazing back at him from time to time.*

GROS. At last they are gone! What is this mysterious fascination that I seem to exercise over all I come across? A curse on my fatal beauty, for I am sick of conquests!

PATIENCE *appears.*

PA. Archibald!
GROS. (*turns and sees her*). Patience!

PA. I have escaped with difficulty from my Reginald. I wanted to see you so much that I might ask you if you still love me as fondly as ever?

GROS. Love you? If the devotion of a lifetime—— (*Seizes her hand.*)

PA. (*indignantly*). Hold! Unhand me, or I scream! (*He releases her.*) If you are a gentleman, pray remember that I am another's! (*Very tenderly.*) But you *do* love me, don't you?

GROS. Madly, hopelessly, despairingly!

PA. That's right! I never can be yours; but that's right!

GROS. And you love this Bunthorne?

PA. With a heart-whole ecstasy that withers, and scorches, and burns, and stings! (*Sadly.*) It is my duty.

GROS. Admirable girl! But you are not happy with him?

PA. Happy? I am miserable beyond description!

GROS. That's right! I never can be yours; but that's right!

PA. But go now. I see dear Reginald approaching. Farewell, dear Archibald; I cannot tell you how happy it has made me to know that you still love me.

GROS. Ah, if I only dared—— (*Advances towards her.*)

PA. Sir! this language to one who is promised to another! (*Tenderly.*) Oh, Archibald, think of me sometimes, for my heart is breaking! He is so unkind to me, and you would be so loving!

GROS. Loving! (*Advances towards her.*)

PA. Advance one step, and as I am a good and pure woman, I scream! (*Tenderly.*) Farewell, Archibald! (*Sternly.*) Stop there! (*Tenderly.*) Think of me sometimes! (*Angrily.*) Advance at your peril! Once more, adieu!

[GROSVENOR *sighs, gazes sorrowfully at her, sighs deeply, and exit. She bursts into tears*

Enter BUNTHORNE, *followed by* JANE. *He is moody and preoccupied.*

JANE *sings.*

In a doleful train,
One and one I walk all day;
For I love in vain—
None so sorrowful as they
Who can only sigh and say,
Woe is me, alackaday!

BUN. (*seeing* PATIENCE). Crying, eh? What are you crying about?

PA. I've only been thinking how dearly I love you!

BUN. Love me! Bah!

JANE. Love him! Bah!

BUN. (*to* JANE). Don't you interfere.

JANE. He always crushes me!

PA. (*going to him*). What is the matter, dear Reginald? If you have any sorrow, tell it to me, that I may share it with you. (*Sighing.*) It is my duty!

BUN. (*snappishly*). Whom were you talking with just now?

PA. With dear Archibald.

BUN. (*furiously*). With dear Archibald! Upon my honour, this is too much!

JANE. A great deal too much!

BUN. (*angrily to* JANE). Do be quiet!

JANE. Crushed again!

PA. I think he is the noblest, purest, and most perfect being I have ever met. But I don't love him. It is true that he is devotedly attached to me, but indeed I don't love *him*. Whenever he grows affectionate, I scream. It is my duty! (*Sighing.*)

BUN. I dare say!

JANE. So do I! *I* dare say!

PA. Why, how could I love him and love you too? You can't love two people at once!

BUN. Oh, can't you, though!

PA. No, you can't; I only wish you could.

BUN. I don't believe you know what love is!

PA. (*sighing*). Yes, I do. There was a happy time when I didn't, but a bitter experience has taught me.

[*Exeunt* BUNTHORNE *and* JANE.

BALLAD—PATIENCE.

Love is a plaintive song,
Sung by a suffering maid,
Telling a tale of wrong,
Telling of hope betrayed;
Tuned to each changing note,
Sorry when *he* is sad,
Blind to his every mote,
Merry when he is glad!
Love that no wrong can cure,
Love that is always new,
That is the love that's pure,
That is the love that's true!

Rendering good for ill,
Smiling at every frown,
Yielding your own self-will,
Laughing your tear-drops down;
Never a selfish whim,
Trouble, or pain to stir;
Everything for him,
Nothing at all for her!
Love that will aye endure,
Though the rewards be few,
That is the love that's pure,
That is the love that's true!

[*At the end of ballad exit* PATIENCE, *weeping.*

Enter BUNTHORNE *and* JANE.

BUN. Everything has gone wrong with me since that

smug-faced idiot came here. Before that I was admired—I may say, loved.

JANE. Too mild—adored!

BUN. Do let a poet soliloquize! The damozels used to follow me wherever I went; now they all follow him!

JANE. Not all! *I* am still faithful to you.

BUN. Yes, and a pretty damozel *you* are!

JANE. No, not pretty. Massive. Cheer up! I will never leave you, I swear it!

BUN. Oh, thank you! I know what it is; it's his confounded mildness. They find me too highly spiced, if you please! And no doubt I *am* highly spiced.

JANE. Not for my taste!

BUN. (*savagely*). No, but I am for theirs. But I will show the world I can be as mild as he. If they want insipidity, they shall have it. I'll meet this fellow on his own ground and beat him on it.

JANE. You shall. And I will help you.

BUN. You will? Jane, there's a good deal of good in you, after all!

DUET—BUNTHORNE *and* JANE.

JANE. So go to him and say to him, with compliment ironical—

BUN. Sing "Hey to you—
Good day to you"—
And that's what I shall say!

JANE. "Your style is much too sanctified—your cut is too canonical"—

BUN. Sing "Bah to you—
Ha! ha! to you"—
And that's what I shall say!

JANE. "I was the beau ideal of the morbid young æsthetical—
To doubt my inspiration was regarded as heretical—
Until you cut me out with your placidity emetical."—

BUN. Sing " Booh to you—
Pooh, pooh to you "—
And that's what I shall say !

BOTH. Sing " Hey to you—good day to you "—
Sing " Bah to you—ha ! ha ! to you "—
Sing " Booh to you—pooh, pooh to you "—
And that's what {you / I} shall say !

BUN. I'll tell him that unless he will consent to be more jocular—

JANE. Sing " Booh to you—
Pooh, pooh to you "—
And that's what you should say !

BUN. To cut his curly hair, and stick an eyeglass in his ocular—

JANE. Sing " Bah to you—
Ha ! ha ! to you "—
And that's what you should say !

BUN. To stuff his conversation full of quibble and of quiddity—
To dine on chops and roly-poly pudding with avidity—
He'd better clear away with all convenient rapidity.

JANE. Sing " Hey to you—
Good day to you "—
And that's what you should say !

BOTH. Sing " Booh to you—pooh, pooh to you "—
Sing " Bah to you—ha ! ha ! to you "—
Sing " Hey to you—good day to you "—
And that's what {I / you} shall say !

[*Exeunt* JANE *and* BUNTHORNE *together.*

Enter DUKE, COLONEL, *and* MAJOR. *They have abandoned their uniforms, and are dressed and made up in imitation of Æsthetics. They have long hair, and other outward signs of attachment to the brotherhood. As they sing they walk in stiff, constrained, and angular attitudes—a grotesque exaggeration of the attitudes adopted by* BUNTHORNE *and the young Ladies in Act I.*

TRIO—DUKE, COLONEL, *and* MAJOR.

It's clear that mediæval art alone retains its zest,
To charm and please its devotees we've done our little best.
We're not quite sure if all we do has the Early English ring;
But, as far as we can judge, it's something like this sort of thing :
You hold yourself like this (*attitude*),
You hold yourself like that (*attitude*),
By hook and crook you try to look both angular and flat (*attitude*).
We venture to expect
That what we recollect,
Though but a part of true High Art, will have its due effect.

If this is not exactly right, we hope you won't upbraid ;
You can't get high Æsthetic tastes, like trousers, ready made.
True views on Mediævalism Time alone will bring,
But, as far as we can judge, it's something like this sort of thing :
You hold yourself like this (*attitude*),
You hold yourself like that (*attitude*),
By hook and crook you try to look both angular and flat (*attitude*).
To cultivate the trim
Rigidity of limb,
You ought to get a Marionette, and form your style on him (*attitude*).

COL. (*attitude*). Yes, it's quite clear that our only chance of making a lasting impression on these young ladies is to become as æsthetic as they are.

MAJ. (*attitude*). No doubt. The only question is how far we've succeeded in doing so. I don't know why, but I've an idea that this is not quite right.

DUKE. (*attitude*). *I* don't like it. I never did. I don't see what it means. I do it, but I don't like it.

COL. My good friend, the question is not whether we like it, but whether they do. They understand these things—we don't. Now I shouldn't be surprised if this is effective enough—at a distance.

MAJ. I can't help thinking we're a little stiff at it. It would be extremely awkward if we were to be "struck" so!

COL. I don't think we shall be struck so. Perhaps we're a little awkward at first—but everything must have a beginning. Oh, here they come! 'Tention!

They strike fresh attitudes, as ANGELA *and* SAPHIR *enter.*

ANG. (*seeing them*). Oh, Saphir—see—see! The immortal fire has descended on them, and they are of the Inner Brotherhood—perceptively intense and consummately utter. (*The Officers have some difficulty in maintaining their constrained attitudes.*)

SAPH. (*in admiration*). How Botticellian! How Fra Angelican! Oh, Art, we thank thee for this boon!

COL. (*apologetically*). I'm afraid we're not quite right.

ANG. Not supremely, perhaps, but oh, so all-but! (*To* SAPHIR.) Oh, Saphir, are they not quite too all-but?

SAPHIR. They are indeed jolly utter!

MAJ. (*in agony*). I wonder what the Inner Brotherhood usually recommend for cramp?

COL. Ladies, we will not deceive you. We are doing this at some personal inconvenience with a view of expressing the extremity of our devotion to you. We trust that it is not without its effect.

ANG. We will not deny that we are much moved by this proof of your attachment.

SAPH. Yes, your conversion to the principles of Æsthetic Art in its highest development has touched us deeply.

ANG. And if Mr. Grosvenor should remain obdurate—

SAPH. Which we have every reason to believe he will—

MAJ. (*aside, in agony*). I wish they'd make haste.

ANG. We are not prepared to say that our yearning hearts will not go out to you.

COL. (*as giving a word of command*). By sections of threes—Rapture! (*All strike a fresh attitude, expressive of æsthetic rapture.*)

SAPH. Oh, it's extremely good—for beginners it's admirable.

MAJ. The only question is, who will take who?

COL. Oh, the Duke chooses first, as a matter of course.

DUKE. Oh, I couldn't think of it—you are really too good!

COL. Nothing of the kind. You are a great matrimonial fish, and it's only fair that each of these ladies should have a chance of hooking you. It's perfectly simple. Observe, suppose you choose Angela, I take Saphir, Major takes nobody. Suppose you choose Saphir, Major takes Angela, I take nobody. Suppose you choose neither, I take Angela, Major takes Saphir. Clear as day!

QUINTET.

DUKE, COLONEL, MAJOR, ANGELA, *and* SAPHIR.

DUKE (*taking* SAPHIR).

If Saphir I choose to marry,
I shall be fixed up for life;
Then the Colonel need not tarry,
Angela can be his wife.

(DUKE *dances with* SAPHIR, COLONEL *with* ANGELA, MAJOR *dances alone.*)

MAJOR (*dancing alone*).

In that case unprecedented,
Single I shall live and die—
I shall have to be contented
With their heartfelt sympathy!

ALL (*dancing as before*).

He will have to be contented
With our heartfelt sympathy!

DUKE (*taking* ANGELA).

If on Angy I determine,
At my wedding she'll appear
Decked in diamonds and in ermine,
Major then can take Saphir!

(DUKE *dances with* ANGELA, MAJOR *with* SAPHIR, COLONEL *dances alone.*)

COLONEL (*dancing*).

In that case unprecedented,
Single I shall live and die—
I shall have to be contented
With their heartfelt sympathy!

ALL (*dancing as before*).

He will have to be contented
With our heartfelt sympathy!

DUKE (*taking both* ANGELA *and* SAPHIR).

After some debate internal,
If on neither I decide,
Saphir then can take the Colonel,
(*Handing* SAPHIR *to* COLONEL.)
Angy be the Major's bride!
(*Handing* ANGELA *to* MAJOR.)

(COLONEL *dances with* SAPHIR, MAJOR *with* ANGELA, DUKE *dances alone.*)

DUKE (*dancing*).

In that case unprecedented,
Single I must live and die—
I shall have to be contented
With their heartfelt sympathy!

ALL (*dancing as before*).

He will have to be contented
With our heartfelt sympathy.

[*At the end,* DUKE, COLONEL, *and* MAJOR, *and two girls dance off arm-in-arm.*

Enter GROSVENOR.

GROS. It is very pleasant to be alone. It is pleasant to be able to gaze at leisure upon those features which all others may gaze upon at their good will! (*Looking at his reflection in hand-mirror.*) Ah, I am a very Narcissus!

Enter BUNTHORNE, *moodily.*

BUN. It's no use; I can't live without admiration. Since Grosvenor came here, insipidity has been at a premium. Ah, he is there!

GROS. Ah, Bunthorne! come here — look! Very graceful, isn't it!

BUN. (*taking hand-mirror*). Allow me; I haven't seen it. Yes, it is graceful.

GROS. (*re-taking hand-mirror*). Oh, good gracious! not that—this——

BUN. You don't mean that! Bah! I am in no mood for trifling.

GROS. And what is amiss?

BUN. Ever since you came here, you have entirely monopolized the attentions of the young ladies. I don't like it, sir!

GROS. My dear sir, how can I help it? They are the plague of my life. My dear Mr. Bunthorne, with your personal disadvantages, you can have no idea of the inconvenience of being madly loved, at first sight, by every woman you meet.

BUN. Sir, until you came here I was adored!

GROS. Exactly—until I came here. That's my grievance. I cut everybody out! I assure you, if you could only suggest some means whereby, consistently with my duty to society, I could escape these inconvenient attentions, you would earn my everlasting gratitude.

BUN. I will do so at once. However popular it may be with the world at large, your personal appearance is highly objectionable to *me*.

GROS. It is? (*Shaking his hand.*) Oh, thank you! thank you! How can I express my gratitude?

BUN. By making a complete change at once. Your conversation must henceforth be perfectly matter-of-fact. You must cut your hair, and have a back parting. In appearance and costume you must be absolutely commonplace.

GROS. (*decidedly*). No. Pardon me, that's impossible.

BUN. Take care! When I am thwarted I am very terrible.

GROS. I can't help that. I am a man with a mission. And that mission must be fulfilled.

BUN. I don't think you quite appreciate the consequences of thwarting me.

GROS. I don't care what they are.

BUN. Suppose—I won't go so far as to say that I will do it—but suppose for one moment I were to curse you? (GROSVENOR *quails.*) Ah! Very well. Take care.

GROS. But surely you would never do that? (*In great alarm.*)

BUN. I don't know. It would be an extreme measure, no doubt. Still——

GROS. (*wildly*). But you would not do it—I am sure you would not. (*Throwing himself at* BUNTHORNE'S *knees, and clinging to him.*) Oh, reflect, reflect! You had a mother once.

BUN. Never!

GROS. Then you had an aunt! (BUNTHORNE *affected.*) Ah! I see you had! By the memory of that aunt, I implore you to pause ere you resort to this last fearful expedient. Oh, Mr. Bunthorne, reflect, reflect! (*Weeping.*)

BUN. (*aside, after a struggle with himself*). I must not allow myself to be unmanned! (*Aloud.*) It is useless. Consent at once, or may a nephew's curse——

GROS. Hold! Are you absolutely resolved?

BUN. Absolutely.

GROS. Will nothing shake you?

BUN. Nothing. I am adamant.

GROS. Very good. (*Rising.*) Then I yield.

BUN. Ha! You swear it?

GROS. I do, cheerfully. I have long wished for a reasonable pretext for such a change as you suggest. It has come at last. I do it on compulsion!

BUN. Victory! I triumph!

DUET—BUNTHORNE *and* GROSVENOR.

BUN. When I go out of door,
Of damozels a score
(All sighing and burning,
And clinging and yearning)
Will follow me as before.
I shall, with cultured taste,
Distinguish gems from paste,
And "High diddle diddle"
Will rank as an idyll,
If I pronounce it chaste!

BOTH. A most intense young man,
A soulful-eyed young man,
An ultra-poetical, super-æsthetical,
Out-of-the-way young man!

GROS. Conceive me, if you can,
An every-day young man:
A commonplace type,
With a stick and a pipe,
And a half-bred black-and-tan;
Who thinks suburban "hops"
More fun than "Monday Pops",
Who's fond of his dinner,
And doesn't get thinner
On bottled beer and chops.

BOTH. A commonplace young man,
A matter-of-fact young man,
A steady and stolid-y, jolly Bank-holiday
Every-day young man!

BUN. A Japanese young man,
A blue-and-white young man,
Francesca di Rimini, miminy, piminy,
Je-ne-sais-quoi young man!

GROS. A Chancery Lane young man,
A Somerset House young man,
A very delectable, highly respectable,
Threepenny-bus young man!

BUN. A pallid and thin young man,
A haggard and lank young man,
A greenery-yallery, Grosvenor Gallery,
Foot-in-the-grave young man!

GROS. A Sewell & Cross young man,
A Howell & James young man,
A pushing young particle—"What's the next article?"—
Waterloo House young man!

ENSEMBLE.

BUN.

Conceive me, if you can,
A crotchety, cracked young man,
An ultra-poetical, super-æsthetical,
Out-of-the-way young man!

GROS.

Conceive me, if you can,
A matter-of-fact young man,
An alphabetical, arithmetical,
Every-day young man!

[*At the end*, GROSVENOR *dances off*. BUNTHORNE *remains*.

BUN. It is all right! I have committed my last act of ill-nature, and henceforth I'm a changed character. (*Dances about stage, humming refrain of last air.*)

Enter PATIENCE. *She gazes in astonishment at him.*

PA. Reginald! Dancing! And—what in the world is the matter with you?

BUN. Patience, I'm a changed man. Hitherto I've been gloomy, moody, fitful—uncertain in temper and selfish in disposition—

PA. You have, indeed! (*Sighing.*)

BUN. All that is changed. I have reformed. I have modelled myself upon Mr. Grosvenor. Henceforth I am mildly cheerful. My conversation will blend amusement with instruction. I shall still be æsthetic; but my æstheticism will be of the most pastoral kind.

PA. Oh, Reginald! Is all this true?

BUN. Quite true. Observe how amiable I am. (*Assuming a fixed smile.*)

PA. But, Reginald, how long will this last?

BUN. With occasional intervals for rest and refreshment, as long as I do.

PA. Oh, Reginald, I'm so happy! (*In his arms.*) Oh, dear, dear Reginald, I cannot express the joy I feel at this change. It will no longer be a duty to love you, but a pleasure—a rapture—an ecstasy!

BUN. My darling!

PA. But—oh, horror! (*Recoiling from him.*)

BUN. What's the matter?

PA. Is it quite certain that you have absolutely reformed—that you are henceforth a perfect being—utterly free from defect of any kind?

BUN. It is quite certain. I have sworn it.

PA. Then I never can be yours!

BUN. Why not?

PA. Love, to be pure, must be absolutely unselfish, and there can be nothing unselfish in loving so perfect a being as you have now become!

BUN. But, stop a bit! I don't want to change—I'll relapse—I'll be as I was—interrupted!

Enter GROSVENOR, *followed by all the young Ladies, who are followed by Chorus of Dragoons. He has had his hair cut, and is dressed in an ordinary suit of dittoes and a pot hat. They all dance cheerfully round the stage in marked contrast to their former languor.*

CHORUS—GROSVENOR *and* GIRLS.

GROS.	GIRLS.
I'm a Waterloo House young man,	We're Swears & Wells young girls,
A Sewell & Cross young man,	We're Madame Louise young girls,
A steady and stolid-y, jolly Bank-holiday,	We're prettily pattering, cheerily chattering,
Every-day young man!	Every-day young girls!

BUN. Angela—Ella—Saphir—what—what does this mean?

ANG. It means that Archibald the All-Right cannot be all-wrong; and if the All-Right chooses to discard æstheticism, it proves that æstheticism ought to be discarded.

PA. Oh, Archibald! Archibald! I'm shocked—surprised—horrified!

GROS. I can't help it. I'm not a free agent. I do it on compulsion.

PA. This is terrible. Go! I shall never set eyes on you again. But—oh, joy!

GROS. What is the matter?

PA. Is it quite, quite certain that you will always be a commonplace young man?

GROS. Always—I've sworn it.

PA. Why, then, there's nothing to prevent my loving you with all the fervour at my command!

GROS. Why, that's true.

PA. My Archibald!

GROS. My Patience! (*They embrace.*)

BUN. Crushed again!

Enter JANE.

JANE (*who is still æsthetic*). Cheer up! I am still here. I have never left you, and I never will!

BUN. Thank you, Jane. After all, there is no denying it, you're a fine figure of a woman!

JANE. My Reginald!

BUN. My Jane!

Flourish. Enter COLONEL, DUKE, *and* MAJOR.

COL. Ladies, the Duke has at length determined to select a bride! (*General excitement.*)

DUKE. I have a great gift to bestow. Approach, such of you as are truly lovely. (*All come forward, bashfully, except* JANE *and* PATIENCE.) In personal appearance you have all that is necessary to make a woman happy. In common fairness, I think I ought to choose the only one among you who has the misfortune to be distinctly plain. (*Girls retire disappointed.*) Jane!

JANE (*leaving* BUNTHORNE'S *arms*). Duke! (JANE *and* DUKE *embrace.* BUNTHORNE *is utterly disgusted.*)

BUN. Crushed again!

FINALE.

DUKE. After much debate internal,
I on Lady Jane decide,
Saphir now may take the Colonel,
Angy be the Major's bride!

(SAPHIR *pairs off with* COLONEL, ANGELA *with* MAJOR, ELLA *with* SOLICITOR.)

BUN. In that case unprecedented,
Single I must live and die—
I shall have to be contented
With a tulip or li*ly*!

(*Takes a lily from button-hole and gazes affectionately at it.*)

ALL. He will have to be contented
With a tulip or li*ly*!

Greatly pleased with one another,
To get married we decide.
Each of us will wed the other,
Nobody be Bunthorne's Bride!

DANCE.

CURTAIN.

THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD

OR

THE MERRYMAN AND HIS MAID

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Richard Cholmondeley (*Lieutenant of the Tower*).
Colonel Fairfax (*under sentence of death*).
Sergeant Meryll (*of the Yeomen of the Guard*).
Leonard Meryll (*his Son*).
Jack Point (*a Strolling Jester*).
Wilfred Shadbolt (*Head Jailer and Assistant Tormentor*).
The Headsman.
First Yeoman.
Second Yeoman.
First Citizen.
Second Citizen.
Elsie Maynard (*a Strolling Singer*).
Phœbe Meryll (*Sergeant Meryll's Daughter*).
Dame Carruthers (*Housekeeper to the Tower*).
Kate (*her Niece*).

Chorus of Yeomen of the Guard, Gentlemen, Citizens, etc.

Scene.—Tower Green.

Date, 16th Century.

First produced at the Savoy Theatre on October 3, 1888.

THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD

OR

THE MERRYMAN AND HIS MAID

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Tower Green.*

PHŒBE *discovered spinning.*

SONG—PHŒBE.

When maiden loves, she sits and sighs,
She wanders to and fro;
Unbidden tear-drops fill her eyes,
And to all questions she replies
With a sad "heigho!"
'Tis but a little word—"heigho!"
So soft, 'tis scarcely heard—"heigho!"
An idle breath—
Yet life and death
May hang upon a maid's "heigho!"

When maiden loves, she mopes apart,
As owl mopes on a tree;
Although she keenly feels the smart,
She cannot tell what ails her heart,
With its sad "Ah me!"

'Tis but a foolish sigh—" Ah me ! "
Born but to droop and die—" Ah me ! "
Yet all the sense
Of eloquence
Lies hidden in a maid's " Ah me ! " (*weeps*).

Enter WILFRED.

WIL. Mistress Meryll !

PHŒ. (*looking up*). Eh ! Oh ! it's you, is it ? You may go away, if you like. Because I don't want you, you know.

WIL. Haven't you anything to say to me ?

PHŒ. Oh yes ! Are the birds all caged ? The wild beasts all littered down ? All the locks, chains, bolts, and bars in good order ? Is the Little Ease sufficiently uncomfortable ? The racks, pincers, and thumbscrews all ready for work ? Ugh ! you brute !

WIL. These allusions to my professional duties are in doubtful taste. I didn't become a head-jailer because I like head-jailing. I didn't become an assistant-tormentor because I like assistant-tormenting. We can't *all* be sorcerers, you know. (PHŒBE *annoyed*.) Ah ! you brought that upon yourself.

PHŒ. Colonel Fairfax is *not* a sorcerer. He's a man of science and an alchemist.

WIL. Well, whatever he is, he won't be one long, for he's to be beheaded to-day for dealings with the devil. His master nearly had him last night, when the fire broke out in the Beauchamp Tower.

PHŒ. Oh ! how I wish he had escaped in the confusion ! But take care ; there's still time for a reply to his petition for mercy.

WIL. Ah ! I'm content to chance that. This evening at half-past seven—ah !

PHŒ. You're a cruel monster to speak so unfeelingly of the death of a young and handsome soldier.

WIL. Young and handsome ! How do *you* know he's young and handsome ?

PHŒ. Because I've seen him every day for weeks past taking his exercise on the Beauchamp Tower.

WIL. Curse him!

PHŒ. There, I believe you're jealous of *him*, now. Jealous of a man I've never spoken to! Jealous of a poor soul who's to die in an hour!

WIL. I am! I'm jealous of everybody and everything. I'm jealous of the very words I speak to you—because they reach your ears—and I mustn't go near 'em!

PHŒ. How unjust you are! Jealous of the words you speak to me! Why, you know as well as I do that I don't even like them.

WIL. You used to like 'em.

PHŒ. I used to *pretend* I liked them. It was mere politeness to comparative strangers.

[*Exit* PHŒBE, *with spinning wheel.*

WIL. I don't believe you know what jealousy is! I don't believe you know how it eats into a man's heart—and disorders his digestion—and turns his interior into boiling lead. Oh, you are a heartless jade to trifle with the delicate organization of the human interior!

[*Exit* WILFRED.

Enter Crowd of Men and Women, followed by Yeomen of the Guard.

CHORUS (*as Yeomen march on*).

Tower Warders,
Under orders,
Gallant pikemen, valiant sworders!
Brave in bearing,
Foemen scaring,
In their bygone days of daring!
Ne'er a stranger
There to danger—
Each was o'er the world a ranger;
To the story
Of our glory
Each a bold contributory!

CHORUS OF YEOMEN.

In the autumn of our life,
Here at rest in ample clover,
We rejoice in telling over
Our impetuous May and June.
In the evening of our day,
With the sun of life declining,
We recall without repining
All the heat of bygone noon.

SOLO—2ND YEOMAN.

This the autumn of our life,
This the evening of our day;
Weary we of battle strife,
Weary we of mortal fray.
But our year is not so spent,
And our days are not so faded,
But that we with one consent,
Were our lovèd land invaded,
Still would face a foreign foe,
As in days of long ago.

CHORUS. Still would face a foreign foe,
As in days of long ago.

PEOPLE. Tower Warders, Under orders, etc.

YEOMEN. This the autumn of our life, etc.

[*Exeunt Crowd. Manent Yeomen.*

Enter DAME CARRUTHERS.

DAME. A good day to you!

2ND YEOMAN. Good day, Dame Carruthers. Busy to-day?

DAME. Busy, aye! the fire in the Beauchamp last night has given me work enough. A dozen poor prisoners —Richard Colfax, Sir Martin Byfleet, Colonel Fairfax,

Warren the preacher-poet, and half-a-score others—all packed into one small cell, not six feet square. Poor Colonel Fairfax, who's to die to-day, is to be removed to No. 14 in the Cold Harbour that he may have his last hour alone with his confessor; and I've to see to that.

2ND YEO. Poor gentleman! He'll die bravely. I fought under him two years since, and he valued his life as it were a feather!

PHŒ. He's the bravest, the handsomest, and the best young gentleman in England! He twice saved my father's life; and it's a cruel thing, a wicked thing, and a barbarous thing that so gallant a hero should lose his head—for it's the handsomest head in England!

DAME. For dealings with the devil. Aye! if all were beheaded who dealt with *him*, there'd be busy doings on Tower Green.

PHŒ. You know very well that Colonel Fairfax is a student of alchemy—nothing more, and nothing less; but this wicked Tower, like a cruel giant in a fairy-tale, must be fed with blood, and that blood must be the best and bravest in England, or it's not good enough for the old Blunderbore. Ugh!

DAME. Silence, you silly girl; you know not what you say. I was born in the old keep, and I've grown grey in it, and, please God, I shall die and be buried in it; and there's not a stone in its walls that is not as dear to me as my own right hand.

SONG WITH CHORUS—DAME CARRUTHERS *and* YEOMEN.

When our gallant Norman foes
  Made our merry land their own,
    And the Saxons from the Conqueror were flying,
At his bidding it arose,
  In its panoply of stone,
    A sentinel unliving and undying.

Insensible, I trow,
As a sentinel should be,
Though a queen to save her head should come a-suing.
There's a legend on its brow
That is eloquent to me,
And it tells of duty done and duty doing.

"The screw may twist and the rack may turn,
And men may bleed and men may burn,
O'er London town and its golden hoard
I keep my silent watch and ward!"

CHORUS. The screw may twist, etc.

Within its wall of rock
The flower of the brave
Have perished with a constancy unshaken.
From the dungeon to the block,
From the scaffold to the grave,
Is a journey many gallant hearts have taken.
And the wicked flames may hiss
Round the heroes who have fought
For conscience and for home in all its beauty,
But the grim old fortalice
Takes little heed of aught
That comes not in the measure of its duty.

"The screw may twist and the rack may turn,
And men may bleed and men may burn,
O'er London town and its golden hoard
I keep my silent watch and ward!"

CHORUS. The screw may twist, etc.

[*Exeunt all but* PHŒBE. *Enter* SERGEANT MERYLL.

PHŒ. Father! Has no reprieve arrived for the poor gentleman?

MER. No, my lass; but there's one hope yet. Thy brother Leonard, who, as a reward for his valour in saving

his standard and cutting his way through fifty foes who would have hanged him, has been appointed a Yeoman of the Guard, will arrive to-day; and as he comes straight from Windsor, where the Court is, it may be —it *may* be—that he will bring the expected reprieve with him.

PHŒ. Oh, that he may!

MER. Amen to that! For the Colonel twice saved my life, and I'd give the rest of my life to save his! And wilt thou not be glad to welcome thy brave brother, with the fame of whose exploits all England is a-ringing?

PHŒ. Aye, truly, if he brings the reprieve.

MER. And not otherwise?

PHŒ. Well, he's a brave fellow indeed, and I love brave men.

MER. *All* brave men?

PHŒ. Most of them, I verily believe! But I hope Leonard will not be too strict with me—they say he is a very dragon of virtue and circumspection! Now, my dear old father is kindness itself, and——

MER. And leaves thee pretty well to thine own ways, eh? Well, I've no fears for thee; thou hast a feather-brain, but thou'rt a good lass.

PHŒ. Yes, that's all very well, but if Leonard is going to tell me that I may not do this and I may not do that, and I must not talk to this one, or walk with that one, but go through the world with my lips pursed up and my eyes cast down, like a poor nun who has renounced mankind—why, as I have *not* renounced mankind, and don't mean to renounce mankind, I won't have it—there!

MER. Nay, he'll not check thee more than is good for thee, Phœbe! He's a brave fellow, and bravest among brave fellows, and yet it seems but yesterday that he robbed the Lieutenant's orchard.

Enter LEONARD MERYLL.

LEON. Father!

MER. Leonard! my brave boy! I'm right glad to see thee, and so is Phœbe!

PHŒ. Aye—hast thou brought Colonel Fairfax's reprieve?

LEON. Nay, I have here a despatch for the Lieutenant, but no reprieve for the Colonel!

PHŒ. Poor gentleman! poor gentleman!

LEON. Aye, I would I had brought better news. I'd give my right hand—nay, my body—my life, to save his!

MER. Dost thou speak in earnest, my lad?

LEON. Aye, father—I'm no braggart. Did he not save thy life? and am I not his foster-brother?

MER. Then hearken to me. Thou hast come to join the Yeomen of the Guard!

LEON. Well?

MER. None has seen thee but ourselves?

LEON. And a sentry, who took but scant notice of me.

MER. Now to prove thy words. Give me the despatch, and get thee hence at once! Here is money, and I'll send thee more. Lie hidden for a space, and let no one know. I'll convey a suit of Yeoman's uniform to the Colonel's cell—he shall shave off his beard, so that none shall know him, and I'll own him as my son, the brave Leonard Meryll, who saved his flag and cut his way through fifty foes who thirsted for his life. He will be welcomed without question by my brother-Yeomen, I'll warrant that. Now, how to get access to the Colonel's cell? (*To* PHŒBE.) The key is with thy sour-faced admirer, Wilfred Shadbolt.

PHŒ. (*demurely*). I think—I say, I *think*—I can get anything I want from Wilfred. I think—mind I say, I *think*—you may leave that to me.

MER. Then get thee hence at once, lad—and bless thee for this sacrifice.

PHŒ. And take my blessing, too, dear, dear Leonard!

LEON. And thine, eh? Humph! Thy love is newborn; wrap it up carefully, lest it take cold and die.

TRIO—PHŒBE, LEONARD, MERYLL.

PHŒ. Alas! I waver to and fro!
Dark danger hangs upon the deed!

ALL. Dark danger hangs upon the deed!

LEON. The scheme is rash and well may fail,
But ours are not the hearts that quail,
The hands that shrink, the cheeks that pale
In hours of need!

ALL. No, ours are not the hearts that quail,
The hands that shrink, the cheeks that pale
In hours of need!

MER. The air I breathe to him I owe:
My life is his—I count it naught!

PHŒ. *and* LEON. That life is his—so count it naught!

MER. And shall I reckon risks I run
When services are to be done
To save the life of such an one?
Unworthy thought!

PHŒ. *and* LEON. And shall we reckon risks we run
To save the life of such an one?

ALL. Unworthy thought!
We may succeed—who can foretell?
May heaven help our hope—farewell!

[LEONARD *embraces* MERYLL *and* PHŒBE, *and then exit.* PHŒBE *weeping.*

MER. Nay, lass, be of good cheer, we may save him yet.

PHŒ. Oh! see, father—they bring the poor gentleman from the Beauchamp! Oh, father! his hour is not yet come?

MER. No, no,—they lead him to the Cold Harbour Tower to await his end in solitude. But softly—the Lieutenant approaches! He should not see thee weep.

Enter FAIRFAX, *guarded. The* LIEUTENANT *enters, meeting him.*

LIEUT. Halt! Colonel Fairfax, my old friend, we meet but sadly.

FAIR. Sir, I greet you with all good-will; and I thank you for the zealous care with which you have guarded me from the pestilent dangers which threaten human life outside. In this happy little community, Death, when he comes, doth so in punctual and business-like fashion; and, like a courtly gentleman, giveth due notice of his advent, that one may not be taken unawares.

LIEUT. Sir, you bear this bravely, as a brave man should.

FAIR. Why, sir, it is no light boon to die swiftly and surely at a given hour and in a given fashion! Truth to tell, I would gladly have my life; but if that may not be, I have the next best thing to it, which is death. Believe me, sir, my lot is not so much amiss!

PHŒ. (*aside to* MERYLL). Oh, father, father, I cannot bear it!

MER. My poor lass!

FAIR. Nay, pretty one, why weepest thou? Come, be comforted. Such a life as mine is not worth weeping for. (*Sees* MERYLL.) Sergeant Meryll, is it not? (*To* LIEUT.) May I greet my old friend? (*Shakes* MERYLL'S *hand.*) Why, man, what's all this? Thou and I have faced the grim old king a dozen times, and never has his majesty come to me in such goodly fashion. Keep a stout heart, good fellow—we are soldiers, and we know how to die, thou and I. Take my word for it, it is easier to die well than to live well—for, in sooth, I have tried both.

BALLAD—FAIRFAX.

Is life a boon?
If so, it must befall
That Death, whene'er he call,
Must call too soon.

Though fourscore years he give,
Yet one would pray to live
Another moon!
What kind of plaint have I,
Who perish in July?
I might have had to die,
Perchance, in June!

Is life a thorn?
Then count it not a whit!
Man is well done with it;
Soon as he's born
He should all means essay
To put the plague away;
And I, war-worn,
Poor captured fugitive,
My life most gladly give—
I might have had to live
Another morn!

[*At the end*, PHŒBE *is led off, weeping, by* MERYLL.

FAIR. And now, Sir Richard, I have a boon to beg. I am in this strait for no better reason than because my kinsman, Sir Clarence Poltwhistle, one of the Secretaries of State, has charged me with sorcery, in order that he may succeed to my estate, which devolves to him provided I die unmarried.

LIEUT. As thou wilt most surely do.

FAIR. Nay, as I will most surely *not* do, by your worship's grace! I have a mind to thwart this good cousin of mine.

LIEUT. How?

FAIR. By marrying forthwith, to be sure!

LIEUT. But heaven ha' mercy, whom wouldst thou marry?

FAIR. Nay, I am indifferent on that score. Coming Death hath made of me a true and chivalrous knight,

who holds all womankind in such esteem that the oldest, and the meanest, and the worst-favoured of them is good enough for him. So, my good Lieutenant, if thou wouldst serve a poor soldier who has but an hour to live, find me the first that comes—my confessor shall marry us, and her dower shall be my dishonoured name and a hundred crowns to boot. No such poor dower for an hour of matrimony!

LIEUT. A strange request. I doubt that I should be warranted in granting it.

FAIR. There never was a marriage fraught with so little of evil to the contracting parties. In an hour she'll be a widow, and I—a bachelor again for aught I know!

LIEUT. Well, I will see what can be done, for I hold thy kinsman in abhorrence for the scurvy trick he has played thee.

FAIR. A thousand thanks, good sir; we meet again on this spot in an hour or so. I shall be a bridegroom then, and your worship will wish me joy. Till then, farewell. (*To Guard.*) I am ready, good fellows.

[*Exit with Guard into Cold Harbour Tower.*

LIEUT. He is a brave fellow, and it is a pity that he should die. Now, how to find him a bride at such short notice? Well, the task should be easy!

[*Exit.*

Enter JACK POINT *and* ELSIE MAYNARD, *pursued by a crowd of men and women.* POINT *and* ELSIE *are much terrified;* POINT, *however, assuming an appearance of self-possession.*

CHORUS.

Here's a man of jollity,
Jibe, joke, jollify!
Give us of your quality,
Come, fool, follify!

If you vapour vapidly,
River runneth rapidly,
Into it we fling
Bird who doesn't sing!

Give us an experiment
In the art of merriment;
Into it we throw
Cock who doesn't crow.

Banish your timidity,
And with all rapidity
Give us quip and quiddity—
Willy-nilly, O!

River none can mollify;—
Into it we throw
Fool who doesn't follify,
Cock who doesn't crow!

POINT (*alarmed*). My masters, I pray you bear with us, and we will satisfy you, for we are merry folk who would make all merry as ourselves. For, look you, there is humour in all things, and the truest philosophy is that which teaches us to find it and to make the most of it.

ELSIE (*struggling with one of the crowd*). Hands off, I say, unmannerly fellow!

POINT (*to 1st Citizen*). Ha! Didst thou hear her say, "Hands off"?

1ST CIT. Aye, I heard her say it, and I felt her do it! What then?

POINT. Thou dost not see the humour of that?

1ST CIT. Nay, if I do, hang me!

POINT. Thou dost not? Now observe. She said, "Hands off!" Whose hands? Thine. Off whom? Off *her*. Why? Because she is a woman. Now, had she *not* been a woman, thine hands had not been set upon her at all. So the reason for the laying on of hands is the reason for the taking off of hands, and herein is

contradiction contradicted! It is the very marriage of *pro* with *con*; and no such lopsided union either, as times go, for *pro* is not more unlike *con* than man is unlike woman—yet men and women marry every day with none to say, "Oh, the pity of it!" but I and fools like me! Now wherewithal shall we please you? We can rhyme you couplet, triolet, quatrain, sonnet, rondolet, ballade, what you will. Or we can dance you saraband, gondolet, carole, pimpernel, or Jumping Joan.

ELSIE. Let us give them the singing farce of the Merryman and his Maid—therein is song and dance too.

ALL. Aye, the Merryman and his Maid!

DUET—ELSIE *and* POINT.

POINT. I have a song to sing, O!

ELSIE. Sing me your song, O!

POINT. It is sung to the moon
By a love-lorn loon,
Who fled from the mocking throng, O!
It's a song of a merryman, moping mum,
Whose soul was sad, and whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye.
Heighdy! heighdy!
Misery me, lackadaydee!
He sipped no sup, and he craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye.

ELSIE. I have a song to sing, O!

POINT. What is your song, O?

ELSIE. It is sung with the ring
Of the songs maids sing
Who love with a love life-long, O!
It's the song of a merrymaid, peerly proud,
Who loved a lord, and who laughed aloud

At the moan of the merryman, moping mum,
Whose soul was sad, and whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!
Heighdy! heighdy!
Misery me, lackadaydee!
He sipped no sup, etc.

POINT. I have a song to sing, O!

ELSIE. Sing me your song, O!

POINT. It is sung to the knell
Of a churchyard bell,
And a doleful dirge, ding dong, O!
It's a song of a popinjay, bravely born,
Who turned up his noble nose with scorn
At the humble merrymaid, peerly proud,
Who loved a lord, and who laughed aloud
At the moan of the merryman, moping mum,
Whose soul was sad, and whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

BOTH. Heighdy! heighdy!
Misery me, lackadaydee!
He sipped no sup, etc.

ELSIE. I have a song to sing, O!

POINT. Sing me your song, O!

ELSIE. It is sung with a sigh
And a tear in the eye,
For it tells of a righted wrong, O!
It's a song of the merrymaid, once so gay,
Who turned on her heel and tripped away
From the peacock popinjay, bravely born,
Who turned up his noble nose with scorn
At the humble heart that he did not prize:
So she begged on her knees, with downcast eyes,

For the love of the merryman, moping mum,
Whose soul was sad, and whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

BOTH. Heighdy! heighdy!
Misery me, lackadaydee!
His pains were o'er, and he sighed no more,
For he lived in the love of a ladye!

1ST CIT. Well sung and well danced!
2ND CIT. A kiss for that, pretty maid!
ALL. Aye, a kiss all round.
ELSIE (*drawing dagger*). Best beware! I am armed!
POINT. Back, sirs—back! This is going too far.
2ND CIT. Thou dost not see the humour of it, eh? Yet there is humour in all things—even in this. (*Trying to kiss her.*)
ELSIE. Help! help!

Enter LIEUTENANT *with Guard. Crowd falls back.*

LIEUT. What is this pother?
ELSIE. Sir, we sang to these folk, and they would have repaid us with gross courtesy, but for your honour's coming.
LIEUT. (*to Mob*). Away with ye! Clear the rabble. (*Guards push Crowd off, and go off with them.*) Now, my girl, who are you, and what do you here?
ELSIE. May it please you, sir, we are two strolling players, Jack Point and I, Elsie Maynard, at your worship's service. We go from fair to fair, singing, and dancing, and playing brief interludes; and so we make a poor living.
LIEUT. You two, eh? Are ye man and wife?
POINT. No, sir; for though I'm a fool, there is a limit to my folly. Her mother, old Bridget Maynard, travels with us (for Elsie is a good girl), but the old woman is a-bed with fever, and we have come here to pick up some silver to buy an electuary for her.
LIEUT. Hark ye, my girl! Your mother is ill?

ELSIE. Sorely ill, sir.

LIEUT. And needs good food, and many things that thou canst not buy?

ELSIE. Alas! sir, it is too true.

LIEUT. Wouldst thou earn an hundred crowns?

ELSIE. An hundred crowns! They might save her life!

LIEUT. Then listen! A worthy but unhappy gentleman is to be beheaded in an hour on this very spot. For sufficient reasons, he desires to marry before he dies, and he hath asked me to find him a wife. Wilt thou be that wife?

ELSIE. The wife of a man I have never seen!

POINT. Why, sir, look you, I am concerned in this; for though I am not yet wedded to Elsie Maynard, time works wonders, and there's no knowing what may be in store for us. Have we your worship's word for it that this gentleman will die to-day?

LIEUT. Nothing is more certain, I grieve to say.

POINT. And that the maiden will be allowed to depart the very instant the ceremony is at an end?

LIEUT. The very instant. I pledge my honour that it shall be so.

POINT. An hundred crowns?

LIEUT. An hundred crowns!

POINT. For my part, I consent. It is for Elsie to speak.

TRIO—ELSIE, POINT, *and* LIEUTENANT.

LIEUT. How say you, maiden, will you wed
A man about to lose his head?
For half an hour
You'll be a wife,
And then the dower
Is yours for life.
A headless bridegroom why refuse?
If truth the poets tell,
Most bridegrooms, ere they marry, lose
Both head and heart as well!

ELSIE. A strange proposal you reveal,
It almost makes my senses reel.
Alas! I'm very poor indeed,
And such a sum I sorely need.
My mother, sir, is like to die,
This money life may bring.
Bear this in mind, I pray, if I
Consent to do this thing!

POINT. Though as a general rule of life
I don't allow my promised wife,
My lovely bride that is to be,
To marry any one but me,
Yet if the fee is promptly paid,
And he, in well-earned grave,
Within the hour is duly laid,
Objection I will waive!
Yes, objection I will waive!

ALL. Temptation, oh, temptation,
Were we, I pray, intended
To shun, whate'er our station,
Your fascinations splendid;
Or fall, whene'er we view you,
Head over heels into you?
Temptation, oh, temptation, etc.

(*During this, the* LIEUTENANT *has whispered to* WILFRED (*who has entered*). WILFRED *binds* ELSIE'S *eyes with a kerchief, and leads her into the Cold Harbour Tower.*)

LIEUT. And so, good fellow, you are a jester?

POINT. Aye, sir, and, like some of my jests, out of place.

LIEUT. I have a vacancy for such an one. Tell me, what are your qualifications for such a post?

POINT. Marry, sir, I have a pretty wit. I can rhyme you extempore; I can convulse you with quip and conundrum; I have the lighter philosophies at my tongue's tip; I can be merry, wise, quaint, grim, and sardonic,

one by one, or all at once ; I have a pretty turn for anecdote; I know all the jests—ancient and modern—past, present, and to come ; I can riddle you from dawn of day to set of sun, and, if that content you not, well on to midnight and the small hours. Oh, sir, a pretty wit, I warrant you—a pretty, pretty wit !

RECITATIVE AND SONG—POINT.

I've jibe and joke
And quip and crank
For lowly folk
And men of rank.
I ply my craft
And know no fear,
But aim my shaft
At prince or peer.
At peer or prince—at prince or peer,
I aim my shaft and know no fear !

I've wisdom from the East and from the West,
That's subject to no academic rule ;
You may find it in the jeering of a jest,
Or distil it from the folly of a fool.
I can teach you with a quip, if I've a mind ;
I can trick you into learning with a laugh ;
Oh, winnow all my folly, and you'll find
A grain or two of truth among the chaff !

I can set a braggart quailing with a quip,
The upstart I can wither with a whim ;
He may wear a merry laugh upon his lip,
But his laughter has an echo that is grim !
When they're offered to the world in merry guise,
Unpleasant truths are swallowed with a will—
For he who'd make his fellow-creatures wise
Should always gild the philosophic pill !

LIEUT. And how came you to leave your last employ ?

POINT. Why, sir, it was in this wise. My Lord was the Archbishop of Canterbury, and it was considered that one of my jokes was unsuited to His Grace's family circle. In truth, I ventured to ask a poor riddle, sir—Wherein lay the difference between His Grace and poor Jack Point? His Grace was pleased to give it up, sir. And thereupon I told him that whereas His Grace was paid £10,000 a year for being good, poor Jack Point was good—for nothing. 'Twas but a harmless jest, but it offended His Grace, who whipped me and set me in the stocks for a scurril rogue, and so we parted. I had as lief not take post again with the dignified clergy.

LIEUT. But I trust you are very careful not to give offence. I have daughters.

POINT. Sir, my jests are most carefully selected, and anything objectionable is expunged. If your honour pleases, I will try them first on your honour's chaplain.

LIEUT. Can you give me an example? Say that I had sat me down hurriedly on something sharp?

POINT. Sir, I should say that you had sat down on the spur of the moment.

LIEUT. Humph! I don't think much of that. Is that the best you can do?

POINT. It has always been much admired, sir, but we will try again.

LIEUT. Well, then, I am at dinner, and the joint of meat is but half cooked.

POINT. Why then, sir, I should say that what is *under*done cannot be helped.

LIEUT. I see. I think that manner of thing would be somewhat irritating.

POINT. At first, sir, perhaps; but use is everything, and you would come in time to like it.

LIEUT. We will suppose that I caught you kissing the kitchen wench under my very nose.

POINT. Under *her* very nose, good sir—not under yours! *That* is where *I* would kiss her. Do you take me? Oh, sir, a pretty wit—a pretty, pretty wit!

LIEUT. The maiden comes. Follow me, friend, and we will discuss this matter at length in my library.

POINT. I am your worship's servant. That is to say, I trust I soon shall be. But, before proceeding to a more serious topic, can you tell me, sir, why a cook's brain-pan is like an overwound clock?

LIEUT. A truce to this fooling—follow me.

POINT. Just my luck; my best conundrum wasted!

[*Exeunt.*

Enter ELSIE *from Tower, led by* WILFRED, *who removes the bandage from her eyes, and exit.*

RECITATIVE AND SONG—ELSIE.

'Tis done! I am a bride! Oh, little ring,
That bearest in thy circlet all the gladness
That lovers hope for, and that poets sing,
What bringest thou to me but gold and sadness?
A bridegroom all unknown, save in this wise,
To-day he dies! To-day, alas, he dies!

Though tear and long-drawn sigh
Ill fit a bride,
No sadder wife than I
The whole world wide!
Ah me! Ah me!
Yet maids there be
Who would consent to lose
The very rose of youth,
The flower of life,
To be, in honest truth,
A wedded wife,
No matter whose!

Ah me! what profit we,
O maids that sigh,
Though gold, though gold should live
If wedded love must die?

Ere half an hour has rung,
A widow I!
Ah, heaven, he is too young,
Too brave to die!
Ah me! Ah me!
Yet wives there be
So weary worn, I trow,
That they would scarce complain,
So that they could
In half an hour attain
To widowhood,
No matter how!

O weary wives
Who widowhood would win,
Rejoice that ye have time
To weary in.

[*Exit* ELSIE *as* WILFRED *re-enters.*

WIL. (*looking after* ELSIE). 'Tis an odd freak, for a dying man and his confessor to be closeted alone with a strange singing girl. I would fain have espied them, but they stopped up the keyhole. *My* keyhole!

Enter PHŒBE *with* MERYLL. MERYLL *remains in the background, unobserved by* WILFRED.

PHŒ. (*aside*). Wilfred—and alone!

WIL. Now what could he have wanted with her? That's what puzzles me!

PHŒ. (*aside*). Now to get the keys from him. (*Aloud.*) Wilfred—has no reprieve arrived?

WIL. None. Thine adored Fairfax is to die.

PHŒ. Nay, thou knowest that I have naught but pity for the poor condemned gentleman.

WIL. I know that he who is about to die is more to thee than I, who am alive and well.

PHŒ. Why, that were out of reason, dear Wilfred. Do they not say that a live ass is better than a dead lion? No, I don't mean that!

WIL. Oh, they say that, do they?

PHŒ. It's unpardonably rude of them, but I believe they put it in that way. Not that it applies to thee, who art clever beyond all telling!

WIL. Oh yes, as an assistant-tormentor.

PHŒ. Nay, as a wit, as a humorist, as a most philosophic commentator on the vanity of human resolution.

(PHŒBE *slyly takes bunch of keys from* WILFRED'S *waistband and hands them to* MERYLL, *who enters the Tower, unnoticed by* WILFRED.)

WIL. Truly, I have seen great resolution give way under my persuasive methods (*working a small thumbscrew*). In the nice regulation of a thumbscrew—in the hundredth part of a single revolution lieth all the difference between stony reticence and a torrent of impulsive unbosoming that the pen can scarcely follow. Ha! ha! I am a mad wag.

PHŒ. (*with a grimace*). Thou art a most light-hearted and delightful companion, Master Wilfred. Thine anecdotes of the torture-chamber are the prettiest hearing.

WIL. I'm a pleasant fellow an I choose. I believe I am the merriest dog that barks. Ah, we might be passing happy together——

PHŒ. Perhaps. I do not know.

WIL. For thou wouldst make a most tender and loving wife.

PHŒ. Aye, to one whom I really loved. For there is a wealth of love within this little heart—saving up for—I wonder whom? Now, of all the world of men, I wonder whom? To think that he whom I am to wed is now alive and somewhere! Perhaps far away, perhaps close at hand! And I know him not! It seemeth that I am wasting time in not knowing him.

WIL. Now say that it is I—nay! suppose it for the nonce. Say that we are wed—suppose it only—say that thou art my very bride, and I thy cheery, joyous, bright, frolicsome husband—and that, the day's work being done,

and the prisoners stored away for the night, thou and I are alone together—with a long, long evening before us!

PHŒ. (*with a grimace*). It is a pretty picture—but I scarcely know. It cometh so unexpectedly—and yet—and yet—*were* I thy bride——

WIL. Aye!—wert thou my bride——?

PHŒ. Oh, how I would love thee!

SONG—PHŒBE.

Were I thy bride,
Then all the world beside
Were not too wide
To hold my wealth of love—
Were I thy bride!

Upon thy breast
My loving head would rest,
As on her nest
The tender turtle dove—
Were I thy bride!

This heart of mine
Would be one heart with thine,
And in that shrine
Our happiness would dwell—
Were I thy bride!

And all day long
Our lives should be a song:
No grief, no wrong
Should make my heart rebel—
Were I thy bride!

The silvery flute,
The melancholy lute,
Were night-owl's hoot
To my low-whispered coo—
Were I thy bride!

The skylark's trill
Were but discordance shrill
To the soft thrill
Of wooing as I'd woo—
Were I thy bride!

MERYLL *re-enters; gives keys to* PHŒBE, *who replaces them at* WILFRED'S *girdle, unnoticed by him. Exit* MERYLL.

The rose's sigh
Were as a carrion's cry
To lullaby
Such as I'd sing to thee,
Were I thy bride!

A feather's press
Were leaden heaviness
To my caress.
But then, of course, you see,
I'm not thy bride!

[*Exit* PHŒBE.

WIL. No, thou'rt not—not yet! But, Lord, how she woo'd! I should be no mean judge of wooing, seeing that I have been more hotly woo'd than most men. I have been woo'd by maid, widow, and wife. I have been woo'd boldly, timidly, tearfully, shyly—by direct assault, by suggestion, by implication, by inference, and by innuendo. But this wooing is not of the common order: it is the wooing of one who must needs woo me, if she die for it!

[*Exit* WILFRED.

Enter MERYLL, *cautiously, from Tower.*

MER. (*looking after them*). The deed is, so far, safely accomplished. The slyboots, how she wheedled him! What a helpless ninny is a love-sick man! He is but as a lute in a woman's hands—she plays upon him whatever tune she will. But the Colonel comes. I' faith, he's just in time, for the Yeomen parade here for his execution in two minutes!

Enter FAIRFAX, *without beard and moustache, and dressed in Yeoman's uniform.*

FAIR. My good and kind friend, thou runnest a grave risk for me!

MER. Tut, sir, no risk. I'll warrant none here will recognise you. You make a brave Yeoman, sir! So—this ruff is too high; so—and the sword should hang thus. Here is your halbert, sir; carry it thus. The Yeomen come. Now remember, you are my brave son, Leonard Meryll.

FAIR. If I may not bear mine own name, there is none other I would bear so readily.

MER. Now, sir, put a bold face on it, for they come.

FINALE—ACT I.

Enter Yeomen of the Guard.

CHORUS.

Oh, Sergeant Meryll, is it true—
The welcome news we read in orders?
Thy son, whose deeds of derring-do
Are echoed all the country through,
Has come to join the Tower Warders?
If so, we come to meet him,
That we may fitly greet him,
And welcome his arrival here
With shout on shout and cheer on cheer.
Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

RECITATIVE—SERGEANT MERYLL.

Ye Tower Warders, nursed in war's alarms,
Suckled on gunpowder, and weaned on glory,
Behold my son, whose all-subduing arms
Have formed the theme of many a song and story!
Forgive his aged father's pride; nor jeer
His aged father's sympathetic tear!
(*Pretending to weep.*)

CHORUS.

Leonard Meryll!
Leonard Meryll!
Dauntless he in time of peril!
Man of power,
Knighthood's flower,
Welcome to the grim old Tower,
To the Tower, welcome thou!

RECITATIVE—FAIRFAX.

Forbear, my friends, and spare me this ovation,
I have small claim to such consideration;
The tales that of my prowess are narrated
Have been prodigiously exaggerated!

CHORUS.

'Tis ever thus!
Wherever valour true is found,
True modesty will there abound.

COUPLETS.

1ST YEOMAN. Didst thou not, oh, Leonard Meryll!
Standard lost in last campaign,
Rescue it at deadly peril—
Bear it safely back again?

CHORUS. Leonard Meryll, at his peril,
Bore it safely back again!

2ND YEOMAN. Didst thou not, when prisoner taken,
And debarred from all escape,
Face, with gallant heart unshaken,
Death in most appalling shape?

CHORUS. Leonard Meryll faced his peril,
Death in most appalling shape!

FAIR. (*aside*). Truly I was to be pitied,
Having but an hour to live,
I reluctantly submitted,
I had no alternative!

(*Aloud.*) Oh! the tales that are narrated
Of my deeds of derring-do
Have been much exaggerated,
Very much exaggerated,
Scarce a word of them is true!

CHORUS. They are not exaggerated, etc.

Enter PHŒBE. *She rushes to* FAIRFAX.
Enter WILFRED.

RECITATIVE.

PHŒ. Leonard!
FAIR. (*puzzled*). I beg your pardon?
PHŒ. Don't you know me?
I'm little Phœbe!
FAIR. (*still puzzled*). Phœbe? Is this Phœbe?
What! little Phœbe? (*Aside.*) Who the deuce
may *she* be?
It can't be Phœbe, surely?
WIL. Yes, 'tis Phœbe——
Your sister Phœbe! Your own little sister!
ALL. Aye, he speaks the truth;
'Tis Phœbe!
FAIR. (*pretending to recognise her*). Sister Phœbe!
PHŒ. Oh, my brother!
FAIR. Why, how you've grown! I did not recognise you!
PHŒ. So many years! Oh, brother!
FAIR. Oh, my sister!
WIL. Aye, hug him, girl! There are three thou mayst
hug——
Thy father and thy brother and—myself!
FAIR. Thyself, forsooth? And who art thou thyself?

WIL. Good sir, we are betrothed. (FAIRFAX *turns inquiringly to* PHŒBE.)

PHŒ. Or more or less——
But rather less than more!

WIL. To thy fond care
I do commend thy sister. Be to her
An ever-watchful guardian—eagle-eyed!
And when she feels (as sometimes she does feel)
Disposed to indiscriminate caress,
Be thou at hand to take those favours from her!

ALL. Be thou at hand to take those favours from her!

PHŒ. Yes, yes.
Be thou at hand to take those favours from me!

TRIO—WILFRED, FAIRFAX, *and* PHŒBE.

WIL. To thy fraternal care
Thy sister I commend;
From every lurking snare
Thy lovely charge defend:
And to achieve this end,
Oh! grant, I pray, this boon—
She shall not quit thy sight:
From morn to afternoon—
From afternoon to night—
From seven o'clock to two—
From two to eventide—
From dim twilight to 'leven at night
She shall not quit thy side!

ALL. From morn to afternoon, etc.

PHŒ. So amiable I've grown,
So innocent as well,
That if I'm left alone
The consequences fell
No mortal can foretell.
So grant, I pray, this boon—
I shall not quit thy sight:

From morn to afternoon—
From afternoon to night—
From seven o'clock to two—
From two to eventide—
From dim twilight to 'leven at night
I shall not quit thy side.

ALL. From morn to afternoon, etc.

FAIR. With brotherly readiness,
For my fair sister's sake,
At once I answer "Yes"—
That task I undertake—
My word I never break.
I freely grant that boon,
And I'll repeat my plight.
From morn to afternoon— (*kiss*)
From afternoon to night— (*kiss*)
From seven o'clock to two— (*kiss*)
From two to evening meal— (*kiss*)
From dim twilight to 'leven at night
That compact I will seal. (*kiss*)

ALL. From morn to afternoon, etc.

The bell of St. Peter's begins to toll. The Crowd enters; the block is brought on to the stage, and the Headsman takes his place. The Yeomen of the Guard form up. The LIEUTENANT *enters and takes his place, and tells off* FAIRFAX *and two others to bring the prisoner to execution.* WILFRED, FAIRFAX, *and two Yeomen exeunt to Tower.*

CHORUS (*to tolling accompaniment*).

The prisoner comes to meet his doom;
The block, the headsman, and the tomb.
The funeral bell begins to toll—
May Heaven have mercy on his soul!

SOLO—ELSIE, *with* CHORUS.

Oh, Mercy, thou whose smile has shone
So many a captive heart upon ;
Of all immured within these walls,
To-day the very worthiest falls !

Enter FAIRFAX *and two other Yeomen from Tower in great excitement.*

FAIR. My lord ! I know not how to tell
The news I bear !
I and my comrades sought the prisoner's cell—
He is not there !

ALL. He is not there !
They sought the prisoner's cell—he is not there !

TRIO—FAIRFAX *and two Yeomen.*

As escort for the prisoner
We sought his cell, in duty bound ;
The double gratings open were,
No prisoner at all we found !

We hunted high, we hunted low,
We hunted here, we hunted there—
The man we sought with anxious care
Had vanished into empty air !

[*Exit* LIEUTENANT.

GIRLS. Now, by my troth, the news is fair,
The man has vanished into air !

ALL. As escort for the prisoner
They sought his cell in duty bound, etc.

Enter WILFRED, *followed by* LIEUTENANT.

LIEUT. Astounding news ! The prisoner fled !
(*To* WILFRED.) Thy life shall forfeit be instead !
(WILFRED *is arrested.*)

WIL. My lord, I did not set him free,
I hate the man—my rival he!

(WILFRED *is taken away.*)

MER. The prisoner gone—I'm all agape!
Who could have helped him to escape?

PHŒ. Indeed I can't imagine who!
I've no idea at all—have you?

Enter JACK POINT.

DAME. Of his escape no traces lurk,
Enchantment must have been at work!

ELSIE (*aside to* POINT).
What have I done! Oh, woe is me!
I am his wife, and he is free!

POINT. Oh, woe is *you*? Your anguish sink!
Oh, woe is *me*, I rather think!
Oh, woe is *me*, I rather think!
Yes, woe is *me*, I rather think!
Whate'er betide
You are his bride,
And I am left
Alone—bereft!
Yes, woe is *me*, I rather think!
Yes, woe is *me*, I rather think!

ENSEMBLE—LIEUTENANT *and* CHORUS.

All frenzied with despair I rave,
The grave is cheated of its due.
Who is the misbegotten knave
Who hath contrived this deed to do?
Let search be made throughout the land,
Or {his / my} vindictive anger dread—
A thousand marks to him {he'll / I'll} hand
Who brings him here, alive or dead.

At the end, ELSIE *faints in* FAIRFAX'S *arms; all the Yeomen and populace rush off the stage in different directions, to hunt for the fugitive, leaving only the Headsman on the stage, and* ELSIE *insensible in* FAIRFAX'S *arms.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*The same.—Moonlight.*

Two days have elapsed.

Women and Yeomen of the Guard discovered.

CHORUS.

Night has spread her pall once more,
And the prisoner still is free :
Open is his dungeon door,
Useless now his dungeon key !
He has shaken off his yoke—
How, no mortal man can tell !
Shame on loutish jailer-folk—
Shame on sleepy sentinel !

Enter DAME CARRUTHERS *and* KATE.

SOLO—DAME CARRUTHERS.

Warders are ye ?
Whom do ye ward ?
Bolt, bar, and key,
Shackle and cord,
Fetter and chain,
Dungeon of stone,
All are in vain—
Prisoner's flown !
Spite of ye all, he is free—he is free !
Whom do ye ward ? Pretty warders are ye !

CHORUS OF WOMEN. Pretty warders are ye, etc.

CHORUS.

YEOMEN. Up and down, and in and out,
Here and there, and round about;
Every chamber, every house,
Every chink that holds a mouse,
Every crevice in the keep,
Where a beetle black could creep,
Every outlet, every drain,
Have we searched, but all in vain.

WOMEN. Warders are ye?
Whom do ye ward? etc.

[*Exeunt all.*

Enter JACK POINT, *in low spirits, reading from a huge volume.*

POINT (*reads*). "The Merrie Jestes of Hugh Ambrose. No. 7863. The Poor Wit and the Rich Councillor. A certayne poor wit, being an-hungered, did meet a well-fed councillor. 'Marry, fool,' quoth the councillor, 'whither away?' 'In truth,' said the poor wag, 'in that I have eaten naught these two dayes, I do wither away, and that right rapidly!' The councillor laughed hugely, and gave him a sausage." Humph! The councillor was easier to please than my new master the Lieutenant. I would like to take post under that councillor. Ah! 'tis but melancholy mumming when poor heart-broken, jilted Jack Point must needs turn to Hugh Ambrose for original light humour!

Enter WILFRED, *also in low spirits.*

WIL. (*sighing*). Ah, Master Point!

POINT (*changing his manner*). Ha! friend jailer! Jailer that wast—jailer that never shalt be more! Jailer that jailed not, or that jailed, if jail he did, so unjailerly that 'twas but jerry-jailing, or jailing in joke—though no joke to him who, by unjailerlike jailing, did so jeopardise

his jailership. Come, take heart, smile, laugh, wink, twinkle, thou tormentor that tormentest none—thou racker that rackest not—thou pincher out of place—come, take heart, and be merry, as I am!—(*aside*, *dolefully*)—as I am!

WIL. Aye, it's well for thee to laugh. Thou hast a good post, and hast cause to be merry.

POINT (*bitterly*). Cause? Have we not all cause? Is not the world a big butt of humour, into which all who will may drive a gimlet? See, I am a salaried wit; and is there aught in nature more ridiculous? A poor, dull, heart-broken man, who must needs be merry, or he will be whipped; who must rejoice, lest he starve; who must jest you, jibe you, quip you, crank you, wrack you, riddle you, from hour to hour, from day to day, from year to year, lest he dwindle, perish, starve, pine, and die! Why, when there's naught else to laugh at, I laugh at myself till I ache for it!

WIL. Yet I have often thought that a jester's calling would suit me to a hair.

POINT. Thee? Would suit *thee*, thou death's head and cross-bones?

WIL. Aye, I have a pretty wit—a light, airy, joysome wit, spiced with anecdotes of prison cells and the torture chamber. Oh, a very delicate wit! I have tried it on many a prisoner, and there have been some who smiled. Now it is not easy to make a prisoner smile. And it should not be difficult to be a good jester, seeing that thou art one.

POINT. Difficult? Nothing easier. Nothing easier. Attend, and I will prove it to thee!

SONG—POINT.

Oh! a private buffoon is a light-hearted loon,
If you listen to popular rumour;
From the morn to the night he's so joyous and bright,
And he bubbles with wit and good humour!

He's so quaint and so terse, both in prose and in verse ;
Yet though people forgive his transgression,
There are one or two rules that all family fools
Must observe, if they love their profession.
There are one or two rules,
Half a dozen, may be,
That all family fools,
Of whatever degree,
Must observe, if they love their profession.

If you wish to succeed as a jester, you'll need
To consider each person's auricular :
What is all right for B would quite scandalise C
(For C is so very particular) ;
And D may be dull, and E's very thick skull
Is as empty of brains as a ladle ;
While F is F sharp, and will cry with a carp
That he's known your best joke from his cradle !
When your humour they flout,
You can't let yourself go ;
And it *does* put you out
When a person says, " Oh,
I have known that old joke from my cradle ! "

If your master is surly, from getting up early
(And tempers are short in the morning),
An inopportune joke is enough to provoke
Him to give you, at once, a month's warning.
Then if you refrain, he is at you again,
For he likes to get value for money ;
He'll ask then and there, with an insolent stare,
" If you know that you're paid to be funny ? "
It adds to the tasks
Of a merryman's place,
When your principal asks,
With a scowl on his face,
If you know that you're paid to be funny ?

Comes a Bishop, maybe, or a solemn D.D.—
Oh, beware of his anger provoking!
Better not pull his hair—don't stick pins in his chair;
He don't understand practical joking.
If the jests that you crack have an orthodox smack,
You may get a bland smile from these sages;
But should they, by chance, be imported from France,
Half-a-crown is stopped out of your wages!
It's a general rule,
Though your zeal it may quench,
If the family fool
Tells a joke that's too French,
Half-a-crown is stopped out of his wages!

Though your head it may rack with a bilious attack,
And your senses with toothache you're losing,
Don't be mopy and flat—they don't fine you for that,
If you're properly quaint and amusing!
Though your wife ran away with a soldier that day,
And took with her your trifle of money;
Bless your heart, they don't mind—they're exceedingly kind—
They don't blame you—as long as you're funny!
It's a comfort to feel,
If your partner should flit,
Though *you* suffer a deal,
They don't mind it a bit—
They don't blame you—so long as you're funny!

POINT. And so thou wouldst be a jester, eh?

WIL. Aye!

POINT. Now, listen! My sweetheart, Elsie Maynard, was secretly wed to this Fairfax half an hour ere he escaped.

WIL. She did well.

POINT. She did nothing of the kind, so hold thy peace and perpend. Now, while he liveth she is dead to

me and I to her, and so, my jibes and jokes notwithstanding, I am the saddest and the sorriest dog in England!

WIL. Thou art a very dull dog indeed.

POINT. Now, if thou wilt swear that thou didst shoot this Fairfax while he was trying to swim across the river—it needs but the discharge of an arquebus on a dark night—and that he sank and was seen no more, I'll make thee the very Archbishop of jesters, and that in two days' time! Now, what sayest thou?

WIL. I am to lie?

POINT. Heartily. But thy lie must be a lie of circumstance, which I will support with the testimony of eyes, ears, and tongue.

WIL. And thou wilt qualify me as a jester?

POINT. As a jester among jesters. I will teach thee all my original songs, my self-constructed riddles, my own ingenious paradoxes; nay, more, I will reveal to thee the source whence I get them. Now, what sayest thou?

WIL. Why, if it be but a lie thou wantest of me, I hold it cheap enough, and I say yes, it is a bargain!

DUET—POINT *and* WILFRED.

BOTH. Hereupon we're both agreed,
All that we two
Do agree to
We'll secure by solemn deed,
To prevent all
Error mental.

POINT. You on Elsie are to call
With a story
Grim and gory;

WIL. How this Fairfax died, and all
I declare to
You're to swear to.

BOTH. Tell a tale of cock and bull,
Of convincing detail full
Tale tremendous,
Heaven defend us!
What a tale of cock and bull!

BOTH. In return for {your / my} own part
{You are / I am} making
Undertaking
To instruct {me / you} in the art
(Art amazing,
Wonder raising)

POINT. Of a jester, jesting free.
Proud position—
High ambition!

WIL. And a lively one I'll be,
Wag-a-wagging,
Never flagging!

BOTH. Tell a tale of cock and bull, etc.

[*Exeunt together.*

Enter FAIRFAX.

FAIR. Two days gone, and no news of poor Fairfax. The dolts! They seek him everywhere save within a dozen yards of his dungeon. So I am free! Free, but for the cursed haste with which I hurried headlong into the bonds of matrimony with—Heaven knows whom! As far as I remember, she should have been young; but even had not her face been concealed by her kerchief, I doubt whether, in my then plight, I should have taken much note of her. Free? Bah! The Tower bonds were but a thread of silk compared with these conjugal fetters which I, fool that I was, placed upon mine own

hands. From the one I broke readily enough—how to break the other!

BALLAD—FAIRFAX.

Free from his fetters grim—
Free to depart;
Free both in life and limb—
In all but heart!
Bound to an unknown bride
For good and ill;
Ah, is not one so tied
A prisoner still?

Free, yet in fetters held
Till his last hour,
Gyves that no smith can weld,
No rust devour!
Although a monarch's hand
Had set him free,
Of all the captive band
The saddest he!

Enter MERYLL.

FAIR. Well, Sergeant Meryll, and how fares thy pretty charge, Elsie Maynard?

MER. Well enough, sir. She is quite strong again, and leaves us to-night.

FAIR. Thanks to Dame Carruthers' kind nursing, eh?

MER. Aye, deuce take the old witch! Ah, 'twas but a sorry trick you played me, sir, to bring the fainting girl to me. It gave the old lady an excuse for taking up her quarters in my house, and for the last two years I've shunned her like the plague. Another day of it and she would have married me! (*Enter* DAME CARRUTHERS *and* KATE.) Good Lord, here she is again! I'll e'en go. (*Going.*)

DAME. Nay, Sergeant Meryll, don't go. I have something of grave import to say to thee.

MER. (*aside*). It's coming.

FAIR. (*laughing*). I'faith, I think I'm not wanted here. (*Going.*)

DAME. Nay, Master Leonard, I've naught to say to thy father that his son may not hear.

FAIR. (*aside*). True. I'm one of the family; I had forgotten!

DAME. 'Tis about this Elsie Maynard. A pretty girl, Master Leonard.

FAIR. Aye, fair as a peach blossom—what then?

DAME. She hath a liking for thee, or I mistake not.

FAIR. With all my heart. She's as dainty a little maid as you'll find in a midsummer day's march.

DAME. Then be warned in time, and give not thy heart to her. Oh, *I* know what it is to give my heart to one who will have none of it!

MER. (*aside*). Aye, *she* knows all about that. (*Aloud.*) And why is my boy to take heed of her? She's a good girl, Dame Carruthers.

DAME. Good enough, for aught I know. But she's no girl. She's a married woman.

MER. A married woman! Tush, old lady—she's promised to Jack Point, the Lieutenant's new jester.

DAME. Tush in thy teeth, old man! As my niece Kate sat by her bedside to-day, this Elsie slept, and as she slept she moaned and groaned, and turned this way and that way—and, "How shall I marry one I have never seen?" quoth she—then, "An hundred crowns!" quoth she—then, "Is it certain he will die in an hour?" quoth she—then, "I love him not, and yet I am his wife," quoth she! Is it not so, Kate?

KATE. Aye, aunt, 'tis even so.

FAIR. Art thou sure of all this?

KATE. Aye, sir, for I wrote it all down on my tablets.

DAME. Now, mark my words: it was of this Fairfax she spake, and he is her husband, or I'll swallow my kirtle!

MER. (*aside*). Is it true, sir?

FAIR. (*aside to* MERYLL). True? Why, the girl was raving! (*Aloud.*) Why should she marry a man who had but an hour to live?

DAME. Marry? There be those who would marry but for a minute, rather than die old maids.

MER. (*aside*). Aye, I know one of them!

QUARTET—FAIRFAX, SERGEANT MERYLL, DAME CARRUTHERS, *and* KATE.

Strange adventure! Maiden wedded
To a groom she's never seen—
Never, never, never seen!
Groom about to be beheaded,
In an hour on Tower Green!
Tower, Tower, Tower Green!
Groom in dreary dungeon lying,
Groom as good as dead, or dying,
For a pretty maiden sighing—
Pretty maid of seventeen!
Seven—seven—seventeen!

Strange adventure that we're trolling:
Modest maid and gallant groom—
Gallant, gallant, gallant groom!—
While the funeral bell is tolling,
Tolling, tolling, Bim-a-boom!
Bim-a, Bim-a, Bim-a-boom!
Modest maiden will not tarry;
Though but sixteen years she carry,
She must marry, she must marry,
Though the altar be a tomb—
Tower—Tower—Tower tomb!

[*Exeunt* DAME CARRUTHERS, MERYLL, *and* KATE.

FAIR. So my mysterious bride is no other than this winsome Elsie! By my hand, 'tis no such ill plunge in

Fortune's lucky bag! I might have fared worse with my eyes open! But she comes. Now to test her principles. 'Tis not every husband who has a chance of wooing his own wife!

Enter ELSIE.

FAIR. Mistress Elsie!

ELSIE. Master Leonard!

FAIR. So thou leavest us to-night?

ELSIE. Yes, Master Leonard. I have been kindly tended, and I almost fear I am loth to go.

FAIR. And this Fairfax. Wast thou glad when he escaped?

ELSIE. Why, truly, Master Leonard, it is a sad thing that a young and gallant gentleman should die in the very fullness of his life.

FAIR. Then when thou didst faint in my arms, it was for joy at his safety?

ELSIE. It may be so. I was highly wrought, Master Leonard, and I am but a girl, and so, when I am highly wrought, I faint.

FAIR. Now, dost thou know, I am consumed with a parlous jealousy?

ELSIE. Thou? And of whom?

FAIR. Why, of this Fairfax, surely!

ELSIE. Of Colonel Fairfax?

FAIR. Aye. Shall I be frank with thee? Elsie—I love thee, ardently, passionately! (ELSIE *alarmed and surprised.*) Elsie, I have loved thee these two days—which is a long time—and I would fain join my life to thine!

ELSIE. Master Leonard! Thou art jesting!

FAIR. Jesting? May I shrivel into raisins if I jest! I love thee with a love that is a fever—with a love that is a frenzy—with a love that eateth up my heart! What sayest thou? Thou wilt not let my heart be eaten up?

ELSIE (*aside*). Oh, mercy! What am I to say?

FAIR. Dost thou love me, or hast thou been insensible these two days?

ELSIE. I love all brave men.

FAIR. Nay, there is love in excess. I thank heaven there are many brave men in England; but if thou lovest them all, I withdraw my thanks.

ELSIE. I love the bravest best, But, sir, I may not listen—I am not free—I—I am a wife!

FAIR. Thou a wife? Whose? His name? His hours are numbered—nay, his grave is dug and his epitaph set up! Come, his name?

ELSIE. Oh, sir! keep my secret—it is the only barrier that Fate could set up between us. My husband is none other than Colonel Fairfax!

FAIR. The greatest villain unhung! The most ill-favoured, ill-mannered, ill-natured, ill-omened, ill-tempered dog in Christendom!

ELSIE. It is very like. He is naught to me—for I never saw him. I was blindfolded, and he was to have died within the hour; and he did not die—and I am wedded to him, and my heart is broken!

FAIR. He was to have died, and he did *not* die? The scoundrel! The perjured, traitorous villain! Thou shouldst have insisted on his dying first, to make sure. 'Tis the only way with these Fairfaxes.

ELSIE. I now wish I had!

FAIR. (*aside*). Bloodthirsty little maiden! (*Aloud.*) A fig for this Fairfax! Be mine—he will never know—he dares not show himself; and if he dare, what art thou to him? Fly with me, Elsie—we will be married to-morrow, and thou shalt be the happiest wife in England!

ELSIE. Master Leonard! I am amazed! Is it thus that brave soldiers speak to poor girls? Oh! for shame, for shame! I am wed—not the less because I love not my husband. I am a wife, sir, and I have a duty, and—oh, sir! thy words terrify me—they are not honest—they are wicked words, and unworthy thy great and brave heart! Oh, shame upon thee! shame upon thee!

FAIR. Nay, Elsie, I did but jest. I spake but to try thee—— (*Shot heard.*)

Enter MERYLL *hastily.*

MER. (*recit.*). Hark! What was that, sir?
FAIR. Why, an arquebus—
Fired from the wharf, unless I much mistake.
MER. Strange—and at such an hour! What can it mean?

Enter CHORUS.

CHORUS.

Now what can that have been—
A shot so late at night,
Enough to cause a fright!
What can the portent mean?

Are foemen in the land?
Is London to be wrecked?
What are we to expect?
What danger is at hand?
Let us understand
What danger is at hand!

LIEUTENANT *enters, also* POINT *and* WILFRED.

RECITATIVE.

LIEUT. Who fired that shot? At once the truth declare!
WIL. My lord, 'twas I—to rashly judge forbear!
POINT. My lord, 'twas he—to rashly judge forbear!

DUET AND CHORUS—WILFRED *and* POINT.

WIL. Like a ghost his vigil keeping—
POINT. Or a spectre all-appalling—
WIL. I beheld a figure creeping—
POINT. I should rather call it crawling—
WIL. He was creeping—
POINT. He was crawling—

WIL. He was creeping, creeping—
POINT. Crawling!
WIL. He was creeping—
POINT. He was crawling—
WIL. He was creeping, creeping—
POINT. Crawling!

WIL. Not a moment's hesitation—
I myself upon him flung,
With a hurried exclamation
To his draperies I hung;
Then we closed with one another
In a rough-and-tumble smother;
Colonel Fairfax and no other
Was the man to whom I clung!

ALL. Colonel Fairfax and no other
Was the man to whom he clung!

WIL. After mighty tug and tussle—
POINT. It resembled more a struggle—
WIL. He, by dint of stronger muscle—
POINT. Or by some infernal juggle—
WIL. From my clutches quickly sliding—
POINT. I should rather call it slipping—
WIL. With a view, no doubt, of hiding—
POINT. Or escaping to the shipping—
WIL. With a gasp, and with a quiver—
POINT. I'd describe it as a shiver—
WIL. Down he dived into the river,
And, alas, I cannot swim.

ALL. It's enough to make one shiver—
With a gasp and with a quiver,
Down he dived into the river;
It was very brave of him!

WIL. Ingenuity is catching ;
With the view my king of pleasing,
Arquebus from sentry snatching—

POINT. I should rather call it seizing —

WIL. With an ounce or two of lead
I despatched him through the head !

ALL. With an ounce or two of lead
He despatched him through the head !

WIL. I discharged it without winking,
Little time I lost in thinking,
Like a stone I saw him sinking—

POINT. I should say a lump of lead.

ALL. He discharged it without winking,
Little time he lost in thinking.

WIL. Like a stone I saw him sinking—

POINT. I should say a lump of lead.

WIL. Like a stone, my boy, I said—

POINT. Like a heavy lump of lead.

WIL. Anyhow, the man is dead,
Whether stone or lump of lead !

ALL. Anyhow, the man is dead,
Whether stone or lump of lead !
Arquebus from sentry seizing,
With the view his king of pleasing,
Wilfred shot him through the head,
And he's very, very dead.
And it matters very little whether stone or lump of lead ;
It is very, very certain that he's very, very dead !

RECITATIVE—LIEUTENANT.

The river must be dragged—no time be lost ;
The body must be found, at any cost.
To this attend without undue delay ;
So set to work with what despatch ye may !

[*Exit.*

ALL. Yes, yes,
We'll set to work with what despatch we may!

(*Four men raise* WILFRED, *and carry him off on their shoulders.*)

CHORUS.

Hail the valiant fellow who
Did this deed of derring-do!
Honours wait on such an one;
By my head, 'twas bravely done!
Now, by my head, 'twas bravely done!

[*Exeunt all but* ELSIE, POINT, FAIRFAX, *and* PHŒBE.

POINT (*to* ELSIE, *who is weeping*). Nay, sweetheart, be comforted. This Fairfax was but a pestilent fellow, and, as he had to die, he might as well die thus as any other way. 'Twas a good death.

ELSIE. Still, he was my husband, and had he not been, he was nevertheless a living man, and now he is dead; and so, by your leave, my tears may flow unchidden, Master Point.

FAIR. And thou didst see all this?

POINT. Aye, with both eyes at once—this and that. The testimony of one eye is naught—he may lie. But when it is corroborated by the other, it is good evidence that none may gainsay. Here are both present in court, ready to swear to him!

PHŒ. But art thou sure it was Colonel Fairfax? Saw you his face?

POINT. Aye, and a plaguey ill-favoured face too. A very hang-dog face—a felon face—a face to fright the headsman himself, and make him strike awry. Oh, a plaguey, bad face, take my word for 't. (PHŒBE *and* FAIRFAX *laugh.*) How they laugh! 'Tis ever thus with simple folk—an accepted wit has but to say "Pass the mustard," and they roar their ribs out!

FAIR. (*aside*). If ever I come to life again, thou shalt pay for this, Master Point!

POINT. Now, Elsie, thou art free to choose again, so behold me: I am young and well-favoured. I have a pretty wit. I can jest you, jibe you, quip you, crank you, wrack you, riddle you——

FAIR. Tush, man, thou knowest not how to woo. 'Tis not to be done with time-worn jests and thread-bare sophistries; with quips, conundrums, rhymes, and paradoxes. 'Tis an art in itself, and must be studied gravely and conscientiously.

TRIO—ELSIE, PHŒBE, *and* FAIRFAX.

FAIR. A man who would woo a fair maid
Should 'prentice himself to the trade,
And study all day,
In methodical way,
How to flatter, cajole, and persuade;
He should 'prentice himself at fourteen,
And practise from morning to e'en;
And when he's of age,
If he will, I'll engage,
He may capture the heart of a queen!

ALL. It is purely a matter of skill,
Which all may attain if they will:
But every Jack,
He must study the knack
If he wants to make sure of his Jill!

ELSIE. If he's made the best use of his time,
His twig he'll so carefully lime
That every bird
Will come down at his word,
Whatever its plumage or clime.

He must learn that the thrill of a touch
May mean little, or nothing, or much :
It's an instrument rare,
To be handled with care,
And ought to be treated as such.

ALL. It is purely a matter of skill, etc.

PHŒ. Then a glance may be timid or free,
It will vary in mighty degree,
From an impudent stare
To a look of despair
That no maid without pity can see !
And a glance of despair is no guide—
It may have its ridiculous side ;
It may draw you a tear
Or a box on the ear ;
You can never be sure till you've tried !

ALL. It is purely a matter of skill, etc.

FAIR. (*aside to* POINT). Now, listen to me—'tis done thus—(*aloud*)—Mistress Elsie, there is one here who, as thou knowest, loves thee right well !

POINT (*aside*). That he does—right well !

FAIR. He is but a man of poor estate, but he hath a loving, honest heart. He will be a true and trusty husband to thee, and if thou wilt be his wife, thou shalt lie curled up in his heart, like a little squirrel in its nest !

POINT (*aside*). 'Tis a pretty figure. A maggot in a nut lies closer, but a squirrel will do.

FAIR. He knoweth that thou wast a wife—an unloved and unloving wife, and his poor heart was near to breaking. But now that thine unloving husband is dead, and thou art free, he would fain pray that thou wouldst hearken unto him, and give him hope that thou wouldst one day be his !

PHŒ. (*alarmed*). He presses her hands — and he

whispers in her ear! Ods bodikins, what does it mean?

FAIR. Now, sweetheart, tell me—wilt thou be this poor good fellow's wife?

ELSIE. If the good, brave man—*is* he a brave man?

FAIR. So men say.

POINT (*aside*). That's not true, but let it pass.

ELSIE. If the brave man will be content with a poor, penniless, untaught maid——

POINT (*aside*). Widow—but let *that* pass.

ELSIE. I will be his true and loving wife, and that with my heart of hearts!

FAIR. My own dear love! (*Embracing her.*)

PHŒ. (*in great agitation*). Why, what's all this? Brother—brother—it is not seemly!

POINT (*also alarmed, aside*). Oh, I can't let *that* pass! (*Aloud.*) Hold, enough, Master Leonard! An advocate should have his fee, but methinks thou art over-paying thyself!

FAIR. Nay, that is for Elsie to say. I promised thee I would show thee how to woo, and herein lies the proof of the virtue of my teaching. Go thou, and apply it elsewhere! (PHŒBE *bursts into tears.*)

QUARTET—ELSIE, PHŒBE, FAIRFAX, *and* POINT.

ELSIE *and* FAIR. When a wooer
Goes a-wooing,
Naught is truer
Than his joy.
Maiden hushing
All his suing—
Boldly blushing—
Bravely coy!

ALL. Oh, the happy days of doing!
Oh, the sighing and the suing!
When a wooer goes a-wooing,
Oh, the sweets that never cloy!

PHŒ. (*weeping*). When a brother
Leaves his sister
For another,
Sister weeps.
Tears that trickle,
Tears that blister—
'Tis but mickle
Sister reaps!

ALL. Oh, the doing and undoing,
Oh, the sighing and the suing,
When a brother goes a-wooing,
And a sobbing sister weeps!

POINT. When a jester
Is outwitted,
Feelings fester,
Heart is lead!
Food for fishes
Only fitted,
Jester wishes
He was dead!

ALL. Oh, the doing and undoing,
Oh, the sighing and the suing,
When a jester goes a-wooing,
And he wishes he was dead!

[*Exeunt all but* PHŒBE, *who remains weeping.*

PHŒ. And I helped that man to escape, and I've kept his secret, and pretended that I was his dearly loving sister, and done everything I could think of to make folk believe I *was* his loving sister, and this is his gratitude! Before I pretend to be sister to anybody again, I'll turn nun, and be sister to everybody—one as much as another!

Enter WILFRED.

WIL. In tears, eh? What a plague art thou grizzling for now?

PHŒ. Why am I grizzling? Thou hast often wept for jealousy—well, 'tis for jealousy I weep now. Aye, yellow, bilious, jaundiced jealousy. So make the most of that, Master Wilfred.

WIL. But I have never given thee cause for jealousy. The Lieutenant's cook-maid and I are but the merest gossips!

PHŒ. Jealous of thee! Bah! I'm jealous of no craven cock-on-a-hill, who crows about what he'd do an he dared! I am jealous of another and a better man than thou—set that down, Master Wilfred. And he is to marry Elsie Maynard, the little pale fool—set that down, Master Wilfred—and my heart is wellnigh broken! There, thou hast it all! Make the most of it!

WIL. The man thou lovest is to marry Elsie Maynard? Why, that is no other than thy brother, Leonard Meryll!

PHŒ. (*aside*). Oh, mercy! what have I said?

WIL. Why, what manner of brother is this, thou lying little jade? Speak! Who is this man whom thou hast called brother, and fondled, and coddled, and kissed!—with my connivance, too! Oh Lord! with my connivance! Ha! should it be this Fairfax! (PHŒBE *starts*.) It is! It is this accursed Fairfax! It's Fairfax! Fairfax, who——

PHŒ. Whom thou hast just shot through the head, and who lies at the bottom of the river!

WIL. A—I—I may have been mistaken. We are but fallible mortals, the best of us. But I'll make sure—I'll make sure. (*Going*.)

PHŒ. Stay—one word. I think it cannot be Fairfax—mind, I say I *think*—because thou hast just slain Fairfax. But whether he be Fairfax or no Fairfax, he is to marry Elsie—and—and—as thou hast shot him through the head, and he is dead, be content with that, and I will be thy wife!

WIL. Is that sure?

PHŒ. Aye, sure enough, for there's no help for it! Thou art a very brute—but even brutes must marry, I suppose.

WIL. My beloved! (*Embraces her.*)
PHŒ. (*aside*). Ugh!

Enter LEONARD, *hastily*.

LEON. Phœbe, rejoice, for I bring glad tidings. Colonel Fairfax's reprieve was signed two days since, but it was foully and maliciously kept back by Secretary Poltwhistle, who designed that it should arrive after the Colonel's death. It hath just come to hand, and it is now in the Lieutenant's possession!

PHŒ. Then the Colonel is free? Oh, kiss me, kiss me, my dear! Kiss me, again, and again!

WIL. (*dancing with fury*). Ods bobs, death o' my life! Art thou mad? Am *I* mad? Are we *all* mad?

PHŒ. Oh, my dear—my dear, I'm wellnigh crazed with joy! (*Kissing* LEONARD.)

WIL. Come away from him, thou hussy—thou jade—thou kissing, clinging cockatrice! And as for thee, sir, devil take thee, I'll rip thee like a herring for this! I'll skin thee for it! I'll cleave thee to the chine! I'll—oh! Phœbe! Phœbe! Who is this man?

PHŒ. Peace, fool. He is my brother!

WIL. Another brother! Are there any more of them? Produce them all at once, and let me know the worst!

PHŒ. This is the real Leonard, dolt; the other was but his substitute. The *real* Leonard, I say—my father's own son.

WIL. How do I know this? Has he "brother" writ large on his brow? I mistrust thy brothers! Thou art but a false jade! [*Exit* LEONARD.

PHŒ. Now, Wilfred, be just. Truly I did deceive thee before—but it was to save a precious life—and to save it, not for me, but for another. They are to be wed this very day. Is not this enough for thee? Come—I am thy Phœbe—thy very own—and we will be wed in a year—or two—or three, at the most. Is not that enough for thee?

Enter MERYLL, *excitedly, followed by* DAME CARRUTHERS (*who listens, unobserved*).

MER. Phœbe, hast thou heard the brave news?

PHŒ. (*still in* WILFRED'S *arms*). Aye, father.

MER. I'm nigh mad with joy! (*Seeing* WILFRED.) Why, what's all this?

PHŒ. Oh, father, he discovered our secret through my folly, and the price of his silence is——

WIL. Phœbe's heart.

PHŒ. Oh dear, no—Phœbe's hand.

WIL. It's the same thing!

PHŒ. *Is* it? [*Exeunt* WILFRED *and* PHŒBE.

MER. (*looking after them*). 'Tis pity, but the Colonel had to be saved at any cost, and as thy folly revealed our secret, thy folly must e'en suffer for it! (DAME CARRUTHERS *comes down.*) Dame Carruthers!

DAME. So this is a plot to shield this arch-fiend, and I have detected it. A word from me, and three heads besides his would roll from their shoulders!

MER. Nay, Colonel Fairfax is reprieved. (*Aside.*) Yet, if my complicity in his escape were known! Plague on the old meddler! There's nothing for it—(*aloud*)—Hush, pretty one! Such bloodthirsty words ill become those cherry lips! (*Aside.*) Ugh!

DAME (*bashfully*). Sergeant Meryll!

MER. Why, look ye, chuck—for many a month I've—I've thought to myself—"There's snug love saving up in that middle-aged bosom for some one, and why not for thee—that's me—so take heart and tell her—that's thee—that thou—that's me—lovest her—thee—and—and—well, I'm a miserable old man, and I've done it—and that's me!" But not a word about Fairfax! The price of thy silence is——

DAME. Meryll's heart?

MER. No, Meryll's *hand*.

DAME. It's the same thing!

MER. *Is* it!

DUET—DAME CARRUTHERS *and* SERGEANT MERYLL.

DAME. Rapture, rapture!
When love's votary,
Flushed with capture,
Seeks the notary,
Joy and jollity
Then is polity;
Reigns frivolity!
Rapture, rapture!

MER. Doleful, doleful!
When humanity,
With its soul full
Of satanity,
Courting privity,
Down declivity
Seeks captivity!
Doleful, doleful!

DAME. Joyful, joyful!
When virginity
Seeks, all coyful,
Man's affinity;
Fate all flowery,
Bright and bowery,
Is her dowery!
Joyful, joyful!

MER. Ghastly, ghastly!
When man, sorrowful,
Firstly, lastly,
Of to-morrow full,
After tarrying,
Yields to harrying—
Goes a-marrying.
Ghastly, ghastly!

BOTH. Rapture, etc.

[*Exeunt* DAME *and* MERYLL.

FINALE.

Enter Yeomen and Women.

CHORUS OF WOMEN.

(ELEGIACS.)

Comes the pretty young bride, a-blushing, timidly shrinking—
Set all thy fears aside—cheerily, pretty young bride!
Brave is the youth to whom thy lot thou art willingly linking!
Flower of valour is he—loving as loving can be!
Brightly thy summer is shining,
Fair as the dawn of the day;
Take him, be true to him—
Tender his due to him—
Honour him, love and obey!

Enter DAME, PHŒBE, *and* ELSIE *as Bride.*

TRIO—PHŒBE, ELSIE, *and* DAME CARRUTHERS.

'Tis said that joy in full perfection
Comes only once to womankind—
That, other times, on close inspection,
Some lurking bitter we shall find.
If this be so, and men say truly,
My day of joy has broken duly.
With happiness {my / her} soul is cloyed—
This is {my / her} joy-day unalloyed!

ALL. Yes, yes, with happiness her soul is cloyed!
This is her joy-day unalloyed!

Flourish. Enter LIEUTENANT.

LIEUT. Hold, pretty one! I bring to thee
News—good or ill, it is for thee to say.

Thy husband lives—and he is free,
And comes to claim his bride this very day!

ELSIE. No! no! recall those words—it cannot be!

ENSEMBLE.

KATE *and* CHORUS.

Oh, day of terror! Day of tears!
Who is the man who, in his pride,
Claims thee as his bride?

DAME CARRUTHERS *and* PHŒBE.

Oh, day of terror! Day of tears!
The man to whom thou art allied
Appears to claim thee as his bride.

LIEUT., MERYLL, *and* WILFRED.

Come, dry these unbecoming tears,
Most joyful tidings greet thine ears,
The man to whom thou art allied
Appears to claim thee as his bride.

ELSIE.

Oh, Leonard, come thou to my side,
And claim me as thy loving bride!
Oh, day of terror! Day of tears!

Flourish. Enter COLONEL FAIRFAX, *handsomely dressed, and attended by other Gentlemen.*

FAIR. (*sternly*). All thought of Leonard Meryll set aside.
Thou art mine own! I claim thee as my bride.

ALL. Thou art his own! Alas! he claims thee as his bride.

ELSIE. A suppliant at thy feet I fall;
Thine heart will yield to pity's call!

FAIR. Mine is a heart of massive rock,
Unmoved by sentimental shock!

ALL. Thy husband he!

ELSIE (*aside*). Leonard, my loved one—come to me.
They bear me hence away!
But though they take me far from thee,
My heart is thine for aye!
My bruised heart,
My broken heart,
Is thine, my own, for aye!

(*To* FAIRFAX.) Sir, I obey!
I am thy bride;
But ere the fatal hour
I said the say
That placed me in thy power
Would I had died!
Sir, I obey!
I am thy bride!

(*Looks up and recognises* FAIRFAX.) Leonard!

FAIR. My own!

ELSIE. Ah! (*Embrace.*)

ELSIE *and* FAIR. With happiness my soul is cloyed,
This is our joy-day unalloyed!

ALL. Yes, yes!
With happiness their souls are cloyed,
This is their joy-day unalloyed!

Enter JACK POINT.

POINT Oh, thoughtless crew!
Ye know not what ye do!
Attend to me, and shed a tear or two—
For I have a song to sing, O!

ALL. Sing me your song, O!

POINT. It is sung to the moon
By a love-lorn loon,
Who fled from the mocking throng, O!
It's the song of a merryman, moping mum,
Whose soul was sad, and whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

ALL. Heighdy! heighdy!
Misery me, lackadaydee!
He sipped no sup, and he craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

ELSIE. I have a song to sing, O!

ALL. What is your song, O?

ELSIE. It is sung with the ring
Of the songs maids sing
Who love with a love life-long, O!
It's the song of a merrymaid, nestling near,
Who loved her lord—but who dropped a tear
At the moan of the merryman, moping mum,
Whose soul was sad, and whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

ALL. Heighdy! heighdy!
Misery me, lackadaydee!
He sipped no sup, and he craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!

FAIRFAX *embraces* ELSIE *as* POINT *falls insensible at their feet.*

CURTAIN.

THE GONDOLIERS

OR

THE KING OF BARATARIA

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE DUKE OF PLAZA-TORO (*a Grandee of Spain*).
LUIZ (*his Attendant*).
DON ALHAMBRA DEL BOLERO (*the Grand Inquisitor*).
MARCO PALMIERI
GIUSEPPE PALMIERI
ANTONIO
FRANCESCO
GIORGIO
ANNIBALE
(*Venetian Gondoliers*).
THE DUCHESS OF PLAZA-TORO.
CASILDA (*her Daughter*).
GIANETTA
TESSA
FIAMETTA
VITTORIA
GIULIA
(*Contadine*).
INEZ (*the King's Foster-mother*).

Chorus of Gondoliers and Contadine, Men-at-Arms, Heralds, and Pages.

ACT I.—The Piazzetta, Venice.

ACT II.—Pavilion in the Palace of Barataria.

(*An interval of three months is supposed to elapse between Acts I. and II.*)

Date 1750.

First produced at the Savoy Theatre on December 7, 1889.

THE GONDOLIERS

OR

THE KING OF BARATARIA

ACT I.

SCENE.—THE PIAZZETTA, VENICE. *The Ducal Palace on the right.*

FIAMETTA, GIULIA, VITTORIA, *and other Contadine discovered, each tying a bouquet of roses.*

CHORUS OF CONTADINE.

List and learn, ye dainty roses,
Roses white and roses red,
Why we bind you into posies
Ere your morning bloom has fled.
By a law of maiden's making,
Accents of a heart that's aching,
Even though that heart be breaking,
Should by maiden be unsaid:
Though they love with love exceeding,
They must seem to be unheeding—
Go ye then and do their pleading,
Roses white and roses red!

FIAMETTA.

Two there are for whom, in duty,
Every maid in Venice sighs—
Two so peerless in their beauty
That they shame the summer skies.
We have hearts for them, in plenty,
They have hearts, but all too few,
We, alas, are four-and-twenty!
They, alas, are only two!
We, alas!

CHORUS. Alas!

FIA. Are four-and-twenty,
They, alas!

CHORUS. Alas!

FIA. Are only two.

CHORUS. They, alas, are only two, alas!
Now ye know, ye dainty roses,
Why we bind you into posies,
Ere your morning bloom has fled,
Roses white and roses red!

During this chorus ANTONIO, FRANCESCO, GIORGIO, *and other Gondoliers have entered unobserved by the Girls—at first two, then two more, then four, then half a dozen, then the remainder of the Chorus.*

SOLI.

FRANC. Good morrow, pretty maids; for whom prepare ye
These floral tributes extraordinary?

FIA. For Marco and Giuseppe Palmieri,
The pink and flower of all the Gondolieri.

GIU. They're coming here, as we have heard but lately,
To choose two brides from us who sit sedately.

ANT. Do all you maidens love them?

ALL. Passionately!

ANT. These gondoliers are to be envied greatly!

GIOR. But what of us, who one and all adore you ?
Have pity on our passion, we implore you !

FIA. These gentlemen must make their choice before you ;

VIT. In the meantime we tacitly ignore you.

GIU. When they have chosen two that leaves you plenty—
Two dozen we, and ye are four-and-twenty.

FIA. *and* VIT. Till then, enjoy your *dolce far niente.*

ANT. With pleasure, nobody *contradicente* !

SONG—ANTONIO *and* CHORUS.

For the merriest fellows are we, tra la,
That ply on the emerald sea, tra la ;
With loving and laughing,
And quipping and quaffing,
We're happy as happy can be, tra la—
As happy as happy can be !

With sorrow we've nothing to do, tra la,
And care is a thing to pooh-pooh, tra la ;
And Jealousy yellow,
Unfortunate fellow,
We drown in the shimmering blue, tra la—
We drown in the shimmering blue !

FIA. (*looking off*). See, see, at last they come to make their choice—
Let us acclaim them with united voice.

(MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *appear in gondola at back.*)

CHORUS (*Girls*). Hail, hail ! gallant gondolieri, ben venuti !
Accept our love, our homage, and our duty.

(MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *jump ashore—the Girls salute them.*)

DUET—MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE, *with* CHORUS OF GIRLS.

MAR. *and* GIU. Buon' giorno, signorine !
GIRLS. Gondolieri carissimi !
Siamo contadine !
MAR. *and* GIU. (*bowing*). Servitori umilissimi !
Per chi questi fiori—
Questi fiori bellissimi ?
GIRLS. Per voi, bei signori
O eccellentissimi !

(*The Girls present their bouquets to* MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE, *who are overwhelmed with them, and carry them with difficulty.*)

MAR. *and* GIU. (*their arms full of flowers*). O ciel' !
GIRLS. Buon' giorno, cavalieri !
MAR. *and* GIU. (*deprecatingly*). Siamo gondolieri.
(*To* FIA. *and* VIT.) Signorina, io t' amo !
GIRLS (*deprecatingly*). Contadine siamo.
MAR. *and* GIU. Signorine !
GIRLS (*deprecatingly*). Contadine !
(*Curtseying to* MAR. *and* GIU.) Cavalieri.
MAR. *and* GIU. (*deprecatingly*). Gondolieri !
Poveri gondolieri !
CHORUS. Buon' giorno, signorine, etc.

DUET—MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE.

We're called *gondolieri*,
But that's a vagary,
It's quite honorary
The trade that we ply.
For gallantry noted
Since we were short-coated,
To beauty devoted,
Giuseppe }
Are Marco } and I ;

When morning is breaking,
Our couches forsaking,
To greet their awaking
With carols we come.
At summer day's nooning,
When weary lagooning,
Our mandolins tuning,
We lazily thrum.
When vespers are ringing,
To hope ever clinging,
With songs of our singing
A vigil we keep,
When daylight is fading,
Enwrapt in night's shading,
With soft serenading
We sing them to sleep.

We're called *gondolieri*, etc.

RECIT.—MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE.

MAR. And now to choose our brides!

GIU. As all are young and fair,
And amiable besides,

BOTH. We really do not care
A preference to declare.

MAR. A bias to disclose
Would be indelicate—

GIU. And therefore we propose
To let impartial Fate
Select for us a mate!

ALL. Viva!

GIRLS. A bias to disclose
Would be indelicate—

MEN. But how do they propose
To let impartial Fate
Select for them a mate?

GIU. These handkerchiefs upon our eyes be good enough to bind,

MAR. And take good care that both of us are absolutely blind;

BOTH. Then turn us round—and we, with all convenient despatch,
Will undertake to marry any two of you we catch!

ALL. Viva!
They undertake to marry any two of { us they catch! / them they catch!

(*The Girls prepare to bind their eyes as directed.*)

FIA. (*to* MARCO). Are you peeping?
Can you see me?

MAR. Dark I'm keeping,
Dark and dreamy!
(MARCO *slyly lifts bandage.*)

VIT. (*to* GIUSEPPE). If you're blinded
Truly, say so.

GIU. All right-minded
Players play so! (*slyly lifts bandage*).

FIA. (*detecting* MARCO). Conduct shady!
They are cheating!
Surely they de-
Serve a beating! (*replaces bandage*).

VIT. (*detecting* GIUSEPPE). This too much is;
Maidens mocking—
Conduct such is
Truly shocking! (*replaces bandage*).

ALL. You can spy, sir!
Shut your eye, sir!
You may use it by and by, sir!
You can see, sir!
Don't tell me, sir!
That will do—now let it be, sir!

CHORUS OF GIRLS. My papa he keeps three horses,
Black, and white, and dapple grey, sir;
Turn three times, then take your courses,
Catch whichever girl you may, sir!

CHORUS OF MEN. My papa, etc.

(MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *turn round, as directed, and try to catch the girls. Business of blind-man's buff. Eventually* MARCO *catches* GIANETTA, *and* GIUSEPPE *catches* TESSA. *The two girls try to escape, but in vain. The two men pass their hands over the girls' faces to discover their identity.*)

GIU. (*Guessing.*) I've at length achieved a capture!
This is Tessa! (*removes bandage*). Rapture, rapture!

MAR. (*guessing*). To me Gianetta fate has granted!
(*removes bandage*)
Just the very girl I wanted!

GIU. (*politely to* MAR.). If you'd rather change——

TESS. My goodness!
This indeed is simple rudeness.

MAR. (*politely to* GIU.). I've no preference whatever—

GIA. Listen to him! Well, I never!
(*Each man kisses each girl.*)

GIA. Thank you, gallant *gondolieri*!
In a set and formal measure
It is scarcely necessary
To express our pleasure.
Each of us to prove a treasure,
Conjugal and monetary,
Gladly will devote our leisure,
Gay and gallant *gondolieri*.
Tra, la, la, la, la, la, etc.

TESS. Gay and gallant *gondolieri*,
Take us both and hold us tightly,
You have luck extraordinary;
We might both have been unsightly!
If we judge your conduct rightly,
'Twas a choice involuntary;
Still we thank you most politely,
Gay and gallant *gondolieri*!
Tra, la, la, la, la, la, etc.

CHORUS OF GIRLS. Thank you, gallant *gondolieri*;
In a set and formal measure,
It is scarcely necessary
To express our pleasure.
Each of us to prove a treasure
Gladly will devote our leisure,
Gay and gallant *gondolieri*!
Tra, la, la, la, la, la, etc.

ALL. Fate in this has put his finger—
Let us bow to Fate's decree,
Then no longer let us linger,
To the altar hurry we!

[*They all dance off two and two*—GIANETTA *with* MARCO, TESSA *with* GIUSEPPE.

Flourish. A gondola arrives at the Piazzetta steps, from which enter the DUKE OF PLAZA-TORO, *the* DUCHESS, *their daughter* CASILDA, *and their attendant* LUIZ, *who carries a drum. All are dressed in pompous but old and faded clothes.*

Entrance of DUKE, DUCHESS, CASILDA, *and* LUIZ

DUKE. From the sunny Spanish shore,
The Duke of Plaza-Tor'—

DUCH. And His Grace's Duchess true—

CAS. And His Grace's daughter, too—

LUIZ. And His Grace's private drum
To Venetia's shores have come :

ALL. If ever, ever, ever
They get back to Spain,
They will never, never, never
Cross the sea again—

DUKE. Neither that Grandee from the Spanish shore,
The noble Duke of Plaza Tor'—

DUCH. Nor His Grace's Duchess, staunch and true—

CAS. You may add, His Grace's daughter, too—

LUIZ. Nor His Grace's own particular drum
To Venetia's shores will come :

ALL. If ever, ever, ever
They get back to Spain,
They will never, never, never
Cross the sea again !

DUKE. At last we have arrived at our destination. This is the Ducal Palace, and it is here that the Grand Inquisitor resides. As a Castilian hidalgo of ninety-five quarterings, I regret that I am unable to pay my state visit on a horse. As a Castilian hidalgo of that description, I should have preferred to ride through the streets of Venice ; but owing, I presume, to an unusually wet season, the streets are in such a condition that equestrian exercise is impracticable. No matter. Where is our suite ?

LUIZ (*coming forward*). Your Grace, I am here.

DUCH. Why do you not do yourself the honour to kneel when you address His Grace ?

DUKE. My love, it is so small a matter ! (*To* LUIZ.) Still, you may as well do it. (LUIZ *kneels*.)

CAS. The young man seems to entertain but an imperfect appreciation of the respect due from a menial to a Castilian hidalgo.

DUKE. My child, you are hard upon our suite.

CAS. Papa, I've no patience with the presumption of persons in his plebeian position. If he does not appreciate that position, let him be whipped until he does.

DUKE. Let us hope the omission was not intended as a slight. I should be much hurt if I thought it was. So would he. (*To* LUIZ.) Where are the halberdiers who were to have had the honour of meeting us here, that our visit to the Grand Inquisitor might be made in becoming state?

LUIZ. Your Grace, the halberdiers are mercenary people who stipulated for a trifle on account.

DUKE. How tiresome! Well, let us hope the Grand Inquisitor is a blind gentleman. And the band who were to have had the honour of escorting us? I see no band!

LUIZ. Your Grace, the band are sordid persons who required to be paid in advance.

DUCH. That's so like a band!

DUKE (*annoyed*). Insuperable difficulties meet me at every turn!

DUCH. But surely they know His Grace?

LUIZ. Exactly—they know His Grace.

DUKE. Well, let us hope that the Grand Inquisitor is a deaf gentleman. A cornet-à-piston would be something. You do not happen to possess the accomplishment of tootling like a cornet-à-piston?

LUIZ. Alas, no, Your Grace! But I can imitate a farmyard.

DUKE (*doubtfully*). I don't see how that would help us. I don't see how we could bring it in.

CAS. It would not help us in the least. We are not a parcel of graziers come to market, dolt!

DUKE. My love, our suite's feelings! (*To* LUIZ.) Be so good as to ring the bell and inform the Grand Inquisitor that his Grace the Duke of Plaza-Toro, Count Matadoro, Baron Picadoro——

DUCH. And suite—

DUKE. And suite—have arrived at Venice, and seek——

CAS. Desire—

DUCH. Demand!

DUKE. And demand an audience.

LUIZ. Your Grace has but to command. (*Rising.*)

DUKE (*much moved*). I felt sure of it—I felt sure of it! (*Exit* LUIZ *into Ducal Palace.*) And now, my love—(*aside to* DUCHESS) Shall we tell her? I think so—(*aloud to* CASILDA) And now, my love, prepare for a magnificent surprise. It is my agreeable duty to reveal to you a secret which should make you the happiest young lady in Venice!

CAS. A secret?

DUCH. A secret which, for State reasons, it has been necessary to preserve for twenty years.

DUKE. When you were a prattling babe of six months old you were married by proxy to no less a personage than the infant son and heir of His Majesty the immeasurably wealthy King of Barataria!

CAS. Married to the infant son of the King of Barataria? Was I consulted? (DUKE *shakes his head.*) Then it was a most unpardonable liberty!

DUKE. Consider his extreme youth and forgive him. Shortly after the ceremony that misguided monarch abandoned the creed of his forefathers, and became a Wesleyan Methodist of the most bigoted and persecuting type. The Grand Inquisitor, determined that the innovation should not be perpetuated in Barataria, caused your smiling and unconscious husband to be stolen and conveyed to Venice. A fortnight since the Methodist Monarch and all his Wesleyan Court were killed in an insurrection, and we are here to ascertain the whereabouts of your husband, and to hail you, our daughter, as Her Majesty, the reigning Queen of Barataria! (*Kneels.*)

During this speech LUIZ *re-enters.*

DUCH. Your Majesty! (*Kneels.*)

DUKE. It is at such moments as these that one feels how necessary it is to travel with a full band.

CAS. I, the Queen of Barataria! But I've nothing to wear! We are practically penniless!

DUKE. That point has not escaped me. Although I am unhappily in straitened circumstances at present, my social influence is something enormous; and a Company, to be called the Duke of Plaza-Toro, Limited, is in course of formation to work me. An influential directorate has been secured, and I shall myself join the Board after allotment.

CAS. Am I to understand that the Queen of Barataria may be called upon at any time to witness her honoured sire in process of liquidation?

DUCH. The speculation is not exempt from that drawback. If your father should stop, it will, of course, be necessary to wind him up.

CAS. But it's so undignified—it's so degrading! A Grandee of Spain turned into a public company! Such a thing was never heard of!

DUKE. My child, the Duke of Plaza-Toro does not follow fashions—he leads them. He always leads everybody. When he was in the army he led his regiment. He occasionally led them into action. He invariably led them out of it.

SONG—DUKE OF PLAZA-TORO.

In enterprise of martial kind,
When there was any fighting,
He led his regiment from behind—
He found it less exciting.
But when away his regiment ran,
His place was at the fore, O—
That celebrated,
Cultivated,
Underrated
Nobleman,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

ALL. In the first and foremost flight, ha, ha!
You always found that knight, ha, ha!
That celebrated,
Cultivated,
Underrated
Nobleman,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

When, to evade Destruction's hand,
To hide they all proceeded,
No soldier in that gallant band
Hid half as well as he did.
He lay concealed throughout the war,
And so preserved his gore, O!
That unaffected,
Undetected,
Well-connected
Warrior,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

ALL. In every doughty deed, ha, ha!
He always took the lead, ha, ha!
That unaffected,
Undetected,
Well-connected
Warrior,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

When told that they would all be shot
Unless they left the service,
That hero hesitated not,
So marvellous his nerve is.
He sent his resignation in,
The first of all his corps, O!
That very knowing,
Overflowing,
Easy-going
Paladin,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

ALL. To men of grosser clay, ha, ha!
He always showed the way, ha, ha!
That very knowing,
Overflowing,
Easy-going
Paladin,
The Duke of Plaza-Toro!

[*Exeunt* DUKE *and* DUCHESS *into Grand Ducal Palace. As soon as they have disappeared,* LUIZ *and* CASILDA *rush to each other's arms.*

RECIT. AND DUET—CASILDA *and* LUIZ.

O rapture, when alone together
Two loving hearts and those that bear them
May join in temporary tether,
Though Fate apart should rudely tear them.

CAS. Necessity, Invention's mother,
Compelled me to a course of feigning—
But, left alone with one another,
I will atone for my disdaining!

Ah, well-beloved,
Mine angry frown
Is but a gown
That serves to dress
My gentleness!

LUIZ. Ah, well-beloved,
Thy cold disdain,
It gives no pain—
'Tis mercy, played
In masquerade!

BOTH. Ah, well-beloved, etc.

CAS. O Luiz, Luiz—what have you said? What have I done? What have I allowed you to do?

LUIZ. Nothing, I trust, that you will ever have reason to repent. (*Offering to embrace her.*)

CAS. (*withdrawing from him*). Nay, Luiz, it may not be. I have embraced you for the last time

LUIZ (*amazed*). Casilda!

CAS. I have just learnt, to my surprise and indignation, that I was wed in babyhood to the infant son of the King of Barataria!

LUIZ. The son of the King of Barataria? The child who was stolen in infancy by the Inquisition?

CAS. The same. But, of course, you know his story.

LUIZ. Know his story? Why, I have often told you that my mother was the nurse to whose charge he was entrusted!

CAS. True. I had forgotten. Well, he has been discovered, and my father has brought me here to claim his hand.

LUIZ. But you will not recognize this marriage? It took place when you were too young to understand its import.

CAS. Nay, Luiz, respect my principles and cease to torture me with vain entreaties. Henceforth my life is another's.

LUIZ. But stay—the present and the future—*they* are another's; but the past—that at least is ours, and none can take it from us. As we may revel in naught else, let us revel in that!

CAS. I don't think I grasp your meaning.

LUIZ. Yet it is logical enough. You say you cease to love me?

CAS. (*demurely*). I say I *may* not love you.

LUIZ. Ah, but you do not say you *did* not love me?

CAS. I loved you with a frenzy that words are powerless to express—and that but ten brief minutes since!

LUIZ. Exactly. My own—that is, until ten minutes since, my own—my lately loved, my recently adored—tell me that until, say a quarter of an hour ago, I was all in all to thee! (*Embracing her.*)

CAS. I see your idea. It's ingenious, but don't do that. (*Releasing herself.*)

LUIZ. There can be no harm in revelling in the past.

CAS. None whatever, but an embrace cannot be taken to act retrospectively.

LUIZ. Perhaps not!

CAS. We may recollect an embrace—I recollect many—but we must not repeat them.

LUIZ. Then let us recollect a few! (*A moment's pause, as they recollect, then both heave a deep sigh.*)

LUIZ. Ah, Casilda, you were to me as the sun is to the earth!

CAS. A quarter of an hour ago?

LUIZ. About that.

CAS. And to think that, but for this miserable discovery, you would have been my own for life!

LUIZ. Through life to death—a quarter of an hour ago!

CAS. How greedily my thirsty ears would have drunk the golden melody of those sweet words a quarter—well, it's now about twenty minutes since. (*Looking at her watch.*)

LUIZ. About that. In such a matter one cannot be too precise.

CAS. And now our love, so full of life, is but a silent, solemn memory!

LUIZ. Must it be so, Casilda?

CAS. Luiz, it must be so!

DUET—CASILDA *and* LUIZ.

LUIZ. There was a time—
A time for ever gone—ah, woe is me!
It was no crime
To love but thee alone—ah, woe is me!
One heart, one life, one soul,
One aim, one goal—
Each in the other's thrall,
Each all in all, ah, woe is me!

BOTH. Oh, bury, bury—let the grave close o'er
The days that were—that never will be more!
Oh, bury, bury love that all condemn,
And let the whirlwind mourn its requiem!

CAS. Dead as the last year's leaves—
As gathered flowers—ah, woe is me!
Dead as the garnered sheaves,
That love of ours—ah, woe is me!
Born but to fade and die
When hope was high,
Dead and as far away
As yesterday!—ah, woe is me!

BOTH. Oh, bury, bury—let the grave close o'er, etc.

Re-enter from the Ducal Palace the DUKE *and* DUCHESS, *followed by* DON ALHAMBRA DEL BOLERO, *the Grand Inquisitor.*

DUKE. My child, allow me to present to you His Distinction Don Alhambra del Bolero, the Grand Inquisitor of Spain. It was His Distinction who so thoughtfully abstracted your infant husband and brought him to Venice.

DON AL. So this is the little lady who is so unexpectedly called upon to assume the functions of Royalty! And a very nice little lady, too!

DUKE. Jimp, isn't she?

DON AL. Distinctly jimp. Allow me! (*Offers his hand. She turns away scornfully.*) Naughty temper!

DUKE. You must make some allowance. Her Majesty's head is a little turned by her access of dignity.

DON AL. I could have wished that Her Majesty's access of dignity had turned it in this direction.

DUCH. Unfortunately, if I am not mistaken, there appears to be some little doubt as to His Majesty's whereabouts.

CAS. (*aside*). A doubt as to his whereabouts? Then we may yet be saved!

DON AL. A doubt? Oh dear, no—no doubt at all!

He is here, in Venice, plying the modest but picturesque calling of a gondolier. I can give you his address—I see him every day! In the entire annals of our history there is absolutely no circumstance so entirely free from all manner of doubt of any kind whatever! Listen, and I'll tell you all about it.

SONG—Don Alhambra (*with* Duke, Duchess, Casilda, *and* Luiz).

I stole the Prince, and brought him here,
And left him gaily prattling
With a highly respectable gondolier,
Who promised the Royal babe to rear,
And teach him the trade of a timoneer
With his own beloved bratling.

Both of the babes were strong and stout,
And, considering all things, clever.
Of that there is no manner of doubt—
No probable, possible shadow of doubt—
No possible doubt whatever.

But owing, I'm much disposed to fear,
To his terrible taste for tippling,
That highly respectable gondolier
Could never declare with a mind sincere
Which of the two was his offspring dear,
And which the Royal stripling!

Which was which he could never make out
Despite his best endeavour.
Of *that* there is no manner of doubt—
No probable, possible shadow of doubt—
No possible doubt whatever.

Time sped, and when at the end of a year
I sought that infant cherished,
That highly respectable gondolier
Was lying a corpse on his humble bier—
I dropped a Grand Inquisitor's tear—
That gondolier had perished.

A taste for drink, combined with gout,
Had doubled him up for ever.
Of *that* there is no manner of doubt—
No probable, possible shadow of doubt—
No possible doubt whatever.

The children followed his old career—
(This statement can't be parried)
Of a highly respectable gondolier:
Well, one of the two (who will soon be here)—
But *which* of the two is not quite clear—
Is the Royal Prince you married!

Search in and out and round about,
And you'll discover never
A tale so free from every doubt—
All probable, possible shadow of doubt—
All possible doubt whatever!

CAS. Then do you mean to say that I am married to one of two gondoliers, but it is impossible to say which?

DON AL. Without any doubt of any kind whatever. But be reassured: the nurse to whom your husband was entrusted is the mother of the musical young man who is such a past-master of that delicately modulated instrument (*indicating the drum*). She can, no doubt, establish the King's identity beyond all question.

LUIZ. Heavens, how did he know that?

DON AL. My young friend, a Grand Inquisitor is always up to date. (*To* CAS.) His mother is at present the wife of a highly respectable and old-established brigand, who carries on an extensive practice in the mountains around Cordova. Accompanied by two of my emissaries, he will set off at once for his mother's address. She will return with them, and if she finds any difficulty in making up her mind, the persuasive influence of the torture chamber will jog her memory.

RECIT.—CASILDA *and* DON ALHAMBRA.

CAS. But, bless my heart, consider my position!
I am the wife of one, that's very clear;
But who can tell, except by intuition,
Which is the Prince, and which the Gondolier?

DON AL. Submit to Fate without unseemly wrangle:
Such complications frequently occur—
Life is one closely complicated tangle:
Death is the only true unraveller!

QUINTET—DUKE, DUCHESS, CASILDA, LUIZ, *and* GRAND INQUISITOR.

ALL. Try we life-long, we can never
Straighten out life's tangled skein,
Why should we, in vain endeavour,
Guess and guess and guess again?

LUIZ. Life's a pudding full of plums,

DUCH. Care's a canker that benumbs.

ALL. Life's a pudding full of plums,
Care's a canker that benumbs.
Wherefore waste our elocution
On impossible solution?
Life's a pleasant institution,
Let us take it as it comes!

Set aside the dull enigma,
We shall guess it all too soon;
Failure brings no kind of stigma—
Dance we to another tune!

LUIZ. String the lyre and fill the cup,

DUCH. Lest on sorrow we should sup.

ALL. String the lyre and fill the cup,
Lest on sorrow we should sup.

Hop and skip to Fancy's fiddle,
Hands across and down the middle—
Life's perhaps the only riddle
That we shrink from giving up!

[*Exeunt all into Ducal Palace except* LUIZ, *who goes off in gondola.*

Enter Gondoliers and Contadine, followed by MARCO, GIANETTA, GIUSEPPE, *and* TESSA.

CHORUS.

Bridegroom and bride!
Knot that's insoluble,
Voices all voluble
Hail it with pride.
Bridegroom and bride!
We in sincerity
Wish you prosperity,
Bridegroom and bride!

SONG—TESSA.

TESS. When a merry maiden marries,
Sorrow goes and pleasure tarries;
Every sound becomes a song,
All is right, and nothing's wrong!
From to-day and ever after
Let our tears be tears of laughter.
Every sigh that finds a vent
Be a sigh of sweet content!
When you marry, merry maiden,
Then the air with love is laden;
Every flower is a rose,
Every goose becomes a swan,
Every kind of trouble goes
Where the last year's snows have gone!

CHORUS. Sunlight takes the place of shade
When you marry, merry maid!

TESS. When a merry maiden marries,
Sorrow goes and pleasure tarries ;
Every sound becomes a song,
All is right, and nothing's wrong.
Gnawing Care and aching Sorrow,
Get ye gone until to-morrow ;
Jealousies in grim array,
Ye are things of yesterday !
When you marry, merry maiden,
Then the air with joy is laden ;
All the corners of the earth
Ring with music sweetly played,
Worry is melodious mirth,
Grief is joy in masquerade ;

CHORUS. Sullen night is laughing day—
All the year is merry May !

At the end of the song, DON ALHAMBRA *enters at back. The Gondoliers and Contadine shrink from him, and gradually go off, much alarmed.*

GIU. And now our lives are going to begin in real earnest ! What's a bachelor ? A mere nothing—he's a chrysalis. He can't be said to live—he exists.

MAR. What a delightful institution marriage is ! Why have we wasted all this time ? Why didn't we marry ten years ago ?

TESS. Because you couldn't find anybody nice enough.

GIA. Because you were waiting for *us*.

MAR. I suppose that *was* the reason. We were waiting for you without knowing it. (DON ALHAMBRA *comes forward.*) Hallo !

DON AL. Good morning.

GIU. If this gentleman is an undertaker, it's a bad omen.

DON AL. Ceremony of some sort going on ?

GIU. (*aside*). He *is* an undertaker ! (*Aloud.*) No—a little unimportant family gathering. Nothing in *your* line.

DON AL. Somebody's birthday, I suppose?

GIA. Yes, mine!

TESS. And mine!

MAR. And mine!

GIU. And mine!

DON AL. Curious coincidence! And how old may you all be?

TESS. It's a rude question—but about ten minutes.

DON AL. Remarkably fine children! But surely you are jesting?

TESS. In other words, we were married about ten minutes since.

DON AL. Married! You don't mean to say you are married?

MAR. Oh yes, we are married.

DON AL. What, both of you?

ALL. All four of us.

DON AL. (*aside*). Bless my heart, how extremely awkward!

GIA. You don't mind, I suppose?

TESS. You were not thinking of either of us for yourself, I presume? Oh, Giuseppe, look at him—he was. He's heart-broken!

DON AL. No, no, I wasn't! I wasn't!

GIU. Now, my man (*slapping him on the back*), we don't want anything in your line to-day, and if your curiosity's satisfied—you can go!

DON AL. You mustn't call me your man. It's a liberty. I don't think you know who I am.

GIU. Not we, indeed! We are jolly gondoliers, the sons of Baptisto Palmieri, who led the last revolution. Republicans, heart and soul, we hold all men to be equal. As we abhor oppression, we abhor kings: as we detest vain-glory, we detest rank: as we despise effeminacy, we despise wealth. We are Venetian gondoliers—your equals in everything except our calling, and in that at once your masters and your servants.

DON AL. Bless my heart, how unfortunate! One of

you may be Baptisto's son, for anything I know to the contrary; but the other is no less a personage than the only son of the late King of Barataria.

ALL. What!

DON AL. And I trust—I *trust* it was that one who slapped me on the shoulder and called me his man!

GIU. One of us a king!
MAR. Not brothers!
TESS. The King of Barataria!
GIA. Well, who'd have thought it!
} *Together.*

MAR. But which is it?

DON AL. What does it matter? As you are both Republicans, and hold kings in detestation, of course you'll abdicate at once. Good morning! (*Going.*)

GIA. *and* TESS. Oh, don't do that! (MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *stop him.*)

GIU. Well, as to that, of course there are kings and kings. When I say that I detest kings, I mean I detest *bad* kings.

DON AL. I see. It's a delicate distinction.

GIU. Quite so. Now I can conceive a kind of king—an ideal king—the creature of my fancy, you know—who would be absolutely unobjectionable. A king, for instance, who would abolish taxes and make everything cheap, except gondolas——

MAR. And give a great many free entertainments to the gondoliers——

GIU. And let off fireworks on the Grand Canal, and engage all the gondolas for the occasion——

MAR. And scramble money on the Rialto among the gondoliers.

GIU. Such a king would be a blessing to his people, and if I were a king, that is the sort of king I would be.

MAR. And so would I!

DON AL. Come, I'm glad to find your objections are not insuperable.

MAR. *and* GIU. Oh, they're not insuperable.

GIA. *and* TESS. No, they're not insuperable.

GIU. Besides, we are open to conviction.

GIA. Yes ; they are open to conviction.

TESS. Oh ! they've often been convicted.

GIU. Our views may have been hastily formed on insufficient grounds. They may be crude, ill-digested, erroneous. I've a very poor opinion of the politician who is not open to conviction.

TESS. (*to* GIA.). Oh, he's a fine fellow !

GIA. Yes, that's the sort of politician for *my* money !

DON AL. Then we'll consider it settled. Now, as the country is in a state of insurrection, it is absolutely necessary that you should assume the reins of Government at once ; and, until it is ascertained which of you is to be king, I have arranged that you will reign jointly, so that no question can arise hereafter as to the validity of any of your acts.

MAR. As one individual ?

DON AL. As one individual.

GIU. (*linking himself with* MARCO). Like this ?

DON AL. Something like that.

MAR. And we may take our friends with us, and give them places about the Court ?

DON AL. Undoubtedly. That's always done !

MAR. I'm convinced !

GIU. So am I !

TESS. Then the sooner we're off the better.

GIA. We'll just run home and pack up a few things (*going*)——

DON AL. Stop, stop—that won't do at all—ladies are not admitted.

ALL. What !

DON AL. Not admitted. Not at present. Afterwards, perhaps. We'll see.

GIU. Why, you don't mean to say you are going to separate us from our wives !

DON AL. (*aside*). This is very awkward ! (*Aloud.*)

Only for a time—a few months. After all, what is a few months?

TESS. But we've only been married half an hour! (*Weeps.*)

FINALE, ACT I.

SONG—GIANETTA.

Kind sir, you cannot have the heart
Our lives to part
From those to whom an hour ago
We were united!
Before our flowing hopes you stem,
Ah, look at them,
And pause before you deal this blow,
All uninvited!
You men can never understand
That heart and hand
Cannot be separated when
We go a-yearning;
You see, you've only women's eyes
To idolize
And only women's hearts, poor men,
To set *you* burning!
Ah me, you men will never understand
That woman's heart is one with woman's hand!

Some kind of charm you seem to find
In womankind—
Some source of unexplained delight
(Unless you're jesting),
But what attracts you, I confess,
I cannot guess,
To me a woman's face is quite
Uninteresting!
If from my sister I were torn,
It could be borne—
I should, no doubt, be horrified,
But I could bear it;—

But Marco's quite another thing—
He is my King,
He has my heart and none beside
Shall ever share it!
Ah me, you men will never understand
That woman's heart is one with woman's hand!

RECIT.—DON ALHAMBRA.

Do not give way to this uncalled-for grief,
Your separation will be very brief.
To ascertain which is the King
And which the other,
To Barataria's Court I'll bring
His foster-mother;
Her former nurseling to declare
She'll be delighted.
That settled, let each happy pair
Be reunited.

MAR., GIU., GIA., TESS. Viva! His argument is strong!
Viva! We'll not be parted long!
Viva! It will be settled soon!
Viva! Then comes our honeymoon!

[*Exit* DON ALHAMBRA.

QUARTET—MARCO, GIUSEPPE, GIANETTA, TESSA.

GIA. Then one of us will be a Queen,
And sit on a golden throne,
With a crown instead
Of a hat on her head,
And diamonds all her own!
With a beautiful robe of gold and green,
I've always understood;
I wonder whether
She'd wear a feather?
I rather think she should!

ALL. Oh, 'tis a glorious thing, I ween,
To be a regular Royal Queen!
No half-and-half affair, I mean,
But a right-down regular Royal Queen!

MAR. She'll drive about in a carriage and pair,
With the King on her left-hand side,
And a milk-white horse,
As a matter of course,
Whenever she wants to ride!
With beautiful silver shoes to wear
Upon her dainty feet;
With endless stocks
Of beautiful frocks
And as much as she wants to eat!

ALL. Oh, 'tis a glorious thing, I ween, etc.

TESS. Whenever she condescends to walk,
Be sure she'll shine at that,
With her haughty stare
And her nose in the air,
Like a well-born aristocrat!
At elegant high society talk
She'll bear away the bell,
With her "How de do?"
And her "How are you?"
And "I trust I see you well!"

ALL. Oh, 'tis a glorious thing, I ween, etc.

GIU. And noble lords will scrape and bow,
And double themselves in two,
And open their eyes
In blank surprise
At whatever she likes to do.
And everybody will roundly vow
She's fair as flowers in May,
And say, "How clever!"
At whatsoever
She condescends to say!

ALL. Oh, 'tis a glorious thing, I ween,
To be a regular Royal Queen!
No half-and-half affair, I mean,
But a right-down regular Royal Queen!

Enter Chorus of Gondoliers and Contadine.

CHORUS.

Now, pray, what is the cause of this remarkable hilarity?
This sudden ebullition of unmitigated jollity?
Has anybody blessed you with a sample of his charity?
Or have you been adopted by a gentleman of quality?

MAR. *and* GIU. Replying, we sing
As one individual,
As I find I'm a king,
To my kingdom I bid you all.
I'm aware you object
To pavilions and palaces,
But you'll find I respect
Your Republican fallacies.

CHORUS. As they know we object
To pavilions and palaces,
How can they respect
Our Republican fallacies?

MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE.

MAR. For every one who feels inclined,
Some post we undertake to find
Congenial with his frame of mind—
And all shall equal be.

GIU. The Chancellor in his peruke—
The Earl, the Marquis, and the Dook,
The Groom, the Butler, and the Cook—
They all shall equal be.

MAR. The Aristocrat who banks with Coutts—
The Aristocrat who hunts and shoots—
The Aristocrat who cleans our boots—
They all shall equal be!

GIU. The Noble Lord who rules the State—
The Noble Lord who cleans the plate—

MAR. The Noble Lord who scrubs the grate—
They all shall equal be!

GIU. The Lord High Bishop orthodox—
The Lord High Coachman on the box—

MAR. The Lord High Vagabond in the stocks—
They all shall equal be!

BOTH. For every one, etc.

Sing high, sing low,
Wherever they go,
They all shall equal be!

CHORUS. Sing high, sing low,
Wherever they go,
They all shall equal be!

The Earl, the Marquis, and the Dook,
The Groom, the Butler, and the Cook,
The Aristocrat who banks with Coutts,
The Aristocrat who cleans the boots,
The Noble Lord who rules the State,
The Noble Lord who scrubs the grate,
The Lord High Bishop orthodox,
The Lord High Vagabond in the stocks—

For every one, etc.

Sing high, sing low,
Wherever they go,
They all shall equal be!

Then hail! O King,
Whichever you may be,
To you we sing,
But do not bend the knee.
Then hail! O King.

MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE (*together*).

Come, let's away—our island crown awaits me—
Conflicting feelings rend my soul apart!
The thought of Royal dignity elates me,
But leaving thee behind me breaks my heart!
(*Addressing* GIANETTA *and* TESSA.)

GIANETTA *and* TESSA (*together*).

Farewell, my love; on board you must be getting;
But while upon the sea you gaily roam,
Remember that a heart for thee is fretting—
The tender little heart you've left at home!

GIA. Now, Marco dear,
My wishes hear:
While you're away
It's understood
You will be good,
And not too gay.
To every trace
Of maiden grace
You will be blind,
And will not glance
By any chance
On womankind!

If you are wise,
You'll shut your eyes
Till we arrive,
And not address
A lady less
Than forty-five.
You'll please to frown
On every gown
That you may see;
And, O my pet,
You won't forget
You've married me!

And O my darling, O my pet,
Whatever else you may forget,
In yonder isle beyond the sea,
Do not forget you've married me!

TESS. You'll lay your head
Upon your bed
At set of sun.
You will not sing
Of anything
To any one.
You'll sit and mope
All day, I hope,
And shed a tear
Upon the life
Your little wife
Is passing here.

And if so be
You think of me,
Please tell the moon!
I'll read it all
In rays that fall
On the lagoon:
You'll be so kind
As tell the wind
How you may be,
And send me words
By little birds
To comfort me!

And O my darling, O my pet,
Whatever else you may forget,
In yonder isle beyond the sea,
Do not forget you've married me!

QUARTET. O my darling, O my pet, etc.

CHORUS (*during which a "Xebeque" is hauled alongside the quay*).

Then away we go to an island fair
That lies in a Southern sea:
We know not where, and we don't much care,
Wherever that isle may be.

THE MEN (*hauling on boat*). One, two, three,
Haul!
One, two, three,
Haul!
One, two, three,
Haul!
With a will!

ALL. When the breezes are a-blowing
The ship will be going,
When they don't we shall all stand still!
Then away we go to an island fair,
We know not where, and we don't much care,
Wherever that isle may be.

SOLO—MARCO.

Away we go
To a balmy isle,
Where the roses blow
All the winter while.

ALL (*hoisting sail*). Then away we go to an island fair
That lies in a Southern sea:
Then away we go to an island fair,
Then away, then away, then away!

(*The men embark on the "Xebeque". MARCO and GIUSEPPE embracing GIANETTA and TESSA. The girls wave a farewell to the men as the curtain falls.*)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Pavilion in the Court of Barataria.* MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE, *magnificently dressed, are seated on two thrones, occupied in cleaning the crown and the sceptre. The Gondoliers are discovered, dressed, some as courtiers, officers of rank, etc., and others as private soldiers and servants of various degrees. All are enjoying themselves without reference to social distinctions—some playing cards, others throwing dice, some reading, others playing cup and ball, "morra", etc.*

CHORUS OF MEN *with* MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE.

Of happiness the very pith
In Barataria you may see:
A monarchy that's tempered with
Republican Equality.
This form of government we find
The beau-ideal of its kind—
A despotism strict, combined
With absolute equality!

MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE.

Two kings, of undue pride bereft,
Who act in perfect unity,
Whom you can order right and left
With absolute impunity.

Who put their subjects at their ease
By doing all they can to please!
And thus, to earn their bread-and-cheese,
Seize every opportunity.

CHORUS. Of happiness the very pith, etc.

MAR. Gentlemen, we are much obliged to you for your expressions of satisfaction and good feeling—I say, we are much obliged to you for your expressions of satisfaction and good feeling.

ALL. We heard you.

MAR. We are delighted, at any time, to fall in with sentiments so charmingly expressed.

ALL. That's all right.

GIU. At the same time there is just one little grievance that we should like to ventilate.

ALL (*angrily*). What?

GIU. Don't be alarmed—it's not serious. It is arranged that, until it is decided which of us two is the actual King, we are to act as one person.

GIORGIO. Exactly.

GIU. Now, although we act as *one* person, we are, in point of fact, *two* persons.

ANNIBALE. Ah, I don't think we can go into that. It is a legal fiction, and legal fictions are solemn things. Situated as we are, we can't recognize two independent responsibilities.

GIU. No; but you can recognize two independent appetites. It's all very well to say we act as one person, but when you supply us with only one ration between us, I should describe it as a legal fiction carried a little too far.

ANNI. It's rather a nice point. I don't like to express an opinion off-hand. Suppose we reserve it for argument before the full Court?

MAR. Yes, but what are we to do in the meantime?

MAR. *and* GIU. We want our tea.

ANNI. I think we may make an interim order for double rations on their Majesties entering into the usual

undertaking to indemnify in the event of an adverse decision?

GIOR. That, I think, will meet the case. But you must work hard—stick to it—nothing like work.

GIU. Oh, certainly. We quite understand that a man who holds the magnificent position of King should do something to justify it. We are called "Your Majesty", we are allowed to buy ourselves magnificent clothes, our subjects frequently nod to us in the streets, the sentries always return our salutes, and we enjoy the inestimable privilege of heading the subscription lists to all the principal charities. In return for these advantages the least we can do is to make ourselves useful about the Palace.

SONG—GIUSEPPE *with* CHORUS.

Rising early in the morning,
We proceed to light the fire,
Then our Majesty adorning
In its workaday attire,
We embark without delay
On the duties of the day.

First, we polish off some batches
Of political despatches,
And foreign politicians circumvent;
Then, if business isn't heavy,
We may hold a Royal *levée*,
Or ratify some Acts of Parliament.
Then we probably review the household troops—
With the usual "Shalloo humps!" and "Shalloo hoops!"
Or receive with ceremonial and state
An interesting Eastern potentate.
After that we generally
Go and dress our private *valet*—
(It's a rather nervous duty—he's a touchy little man)—
Write some letters literary
For our private secretary—
He is shaky in his spelling, so we help him if we can.

Then, in view of cravings inner,
We go down and order dinner ;
Then we polish the Regalia and the Coronation Plate—
Spend an hour in titivating
All our Gentlemen-in-Waiting ;
Or we run on little errands for the Ministers of State.

Oh, philosophers may sing
Of the troubles of a King ;
Yet the duties are delightful, and the privileges great ;
But the privilege and pleasure
That we treasure beyond measure
Is to run on little errands for the Ministers of State.

CHORUS. Oh, philosophers may sing, etc.

After luncheon (making merry
On a bun and glass of sherry),
If we've nothing in particular to do,
We may make a Proclamation,
Or receive a deputation—
Then we possibly create a Peer or two.
Then we help a fellow-creature on his path
With the Garter or the Thistle or the Bath,
Or we dress and toddle off in semi-state
To a festival, a function, or a *fête*.
Then we go and stand as sentry
At the Palace (private entry),
Marching hither, marching thither, up and down and to and fro,
While the warrior on duty
Goes in search of beer and beauty
(And it generally happens that he hasn't far to go).
He relieves us, if he's able,
Just in time to lay the table,
Then we dine and serve the coffee, and at half-past twelve or one,
With a pleasure that's emphatic,
We retire to our attic
With the gratifying feeling that our duty has been done !

Oh, philosophers may sing
Of the troubles of a King,
But of pleasures there are many and of worries there are none;
And the culminating pleasure
That we treasure beyond measure
Is the gratifying feeling that our duty has been done!

CHORUS. Oh, philosophers may sing, etc.

[*Exeunt all but* MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE.

GIU. Yes, it really is a very pleasant existence. They're all so singularly kind and considerate. You don't find them wanting to do this, or wanting to do that, or saying "It's my turn now." No, they let us have all the fun to ourselves, and never seem to grudge it.

MAR. It makes one feel quite selfish. It almost seems like taking advantage of their good nature.

GIU. How nice they were about the double rations.

MAR. Most considerate. Ah! there's only one thing wanting to make us thoroughly comfortable.

GIU. And that is?

MAR. The dear little wives we left behind us three months ago.

GIU. Yes, it *is* dull without female society. We can do without everything else, but we can't do without that.

MAR. And if we have that in perfection, we have everything. There is only one recipe for perfect happiness.

SONG—MARCO.

Take a pair of sparkling eyes,
Hidden, ever and anon,
In a merciful eclipse—
Do not heed their mild surprise—
Having passed the Rubicon,
Take a pair of rosy lips;

Take a figure trimly planned—
Such as admiration whets
(Be particular in this);
Take a tender little hand,
Fringed with dainty fingerettes,
Press it—in parenthesis;—
Ah! Take all these, you lucky man—
Take and keep them, if you can!

Take a pretty little cot—
Quite a miniature affair—
Hung about with trellised vine,
Furnish it upon the spot
With the treasures rich and rare
I've endeavoured to define.
Live to love and love to live—
You will ripen at your ease,
Growing on the sunny side—
Fate has nothing more to give.
You're a dainty man to please
If you are not satisfied.
Ah! Take my counsel, happy man;
Act upon it, if you can!

Enter Chorus of Contadine, running in, led by FIAMETTA *and* VITTORIA. *They are met by all the Ex-Gondoliers, who welcome them heartily.*

SCENA—CHORUS OF GIRLS, QUARTET, DUET *and* CHORUS.

Here we are, at the risk of our lives,
From ever so far, and we've brought your wives—
And to that end we've crossed the main,
And don't intend to return again!

FIA. Though obedience is strong,
Curiosity's stronger—
We waited for long,
Till we couldn't wait longer.

VIT. It's imprudent, we know,
But without your society
Existence was slow,
And we wanted variety—

ALL. So here we are, at the risk of our lives,
From ever so far, and we've brought your wives—
And to that end we've crossed the main,
And don't intend to return again!

Enter GIANETTA *and* TESSA. *They rush to the arms of* MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE.

GIU. Tessa!
TESS. Giuseppe!
GIA. Marco!
MAR. Gianetta! } *Embrace.*

TESSA *and* GIANETTA.

TESS. After sailing to this island—
GIA. Tossing in a manner frightful,
TESS. We are all once more on dry land—
GIA. And we find the change delightful,
TESS. As at home we've been remaining—
We've not seen you both for ages,
GIA. Tell me, are you fond of reigning?—
How's the food, and what's the wages?
TESS. Does your new employment please ye?—
GIA. How does Royalizing strike you?
TESS. Is it difficult or easy?—
GIA. Do you think your subjects like you?
TESS. I am anxious to elicit,
Is it plain and easy steering?
GIA. Take it altogether, is it—
Better fun than gondoliering?
BOTH. We shall both go on requesting
Till you tell us, never doubt it;
Everything is interesting,
Tell us, tell us all about it!

CHORUS. They will both go on requesting, etc.

TESS. Is the populace exacting ?
GIA. Do they keep you at a distance ?
TESS. All unaided are you acting,
GIA. Or do they provide assistance ?
TESS. When you're busy, have you got to
Get up early in the morning ?
GIA. If you do what you ought not to,
Do they give the usual warning ?
TESS. With a horse do they equip you ?
GIA. Lots of trumpeting and drumming ?
TESS. Do the Royal tradesmen tip you ?
GIA. Ain't the livery becoming !
TESS. Does your human being inner
Feed on everything that nice is ?
GIA. Do they give you wine for dinner ;
Peaches, sugar-plums, and ices ?
BOTH. We shall both go on requesting
Till you tell us, never doubt it ;
Everything is interesting,
Tell us, tell us all about it !

CHORUS. They will both go on requesting, etc.

MAR. This is indeed a most delightful surprise !

TESS. Yes, we thought you'd like it. You see, it was like this. After you left we felt very dull and mopey, and the days crawled by, and you never wrote ; so at last I said to Gianetta, " I can't stand this any longer ; those two poor Monarchs haven't got any one to mend their stockings or sew on their buttons or patch their clothes—at least, I hope they haven't—let us all pack up a change and go and see how they're getting on." And she said, " Done," and they all said, " Done " ; and we asked old Giacopo to lend us his boat, and *he* said, " Done " ; and we've crossed the sea, and, thank goodness, *that's* done ; and here we are, and—and—*I've* done !

GIA. And now—which of you is King ?

TESS. And which of us is Queen ?

GIU. That we shan't know until Nurse turns up.

But never mind that—the question is, how shall we celebrate the commencement of our honeymoon? Gentlemen, will you allow us to offer you a magnificent banquet?

ALL. We will!

GIU. Thanks very much; and, ladies, what do you say to a dance?

TESS. A banquet *and* a dance! Oh, it's too much happiness!

CHORUS *and* DANCE.

Dance a cachucha, fandango, bolero,
Xeres we'll drink—Manzanilla, Montero—
Wine, when it runs in abundance, enhances
The reckless delight of that wildest of dances!
To the pretty pitter-pitter-patter,
And the clitter-clitter-clitter-clatter—
Clitter—clitter—clatter,
Pitter—pitter—patter,
Patter, patter, patter, patter, we'll dance.
Old Xeres we'll drink—Manzanilla, Montero;
For wine, when it runs in abundance, enhances
The reckless delight of that wildest of dances!

CACHUCHA.

The dance is interrupted by the unexpected appearance of DON ALHAMBRA, *who looks on with astonishment.* MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *appear embarrassed. The others run off, except Drummer Boy, who is driven off by* DON ALHAMBRA.

DON AL. Good evening. Fancy ball?

GIU. No, not exactly. A little friendly dance. That's all. Sorry you're late.

DON AL. But I saw a groom dancing, and a footman!

MAR. Yes. That's the Lord High Footman.

DON AL. And, dear me, a common little drummer boy!

GIU. Oh no! That's the Lord High Drummer Boy.

DON AL. But surely, surely the servants'-hall is the place for these gentry?

GIU. Oh dear no! *We* have appropriated the servants'-hall. It's the Royal Apartment, and accessible only by tickets obtainable at the Lord Chamberlain's office.

MAR. We really must have some place that we can call our own.

DON AL. (*puzzled*). I'm afraid I'm not quite equal to the intellectual pressure of the conversation.

GIU. You see, the Monarchy has been re-modelled on Republican principles.

DON AL. What!

GIU. All departments rank equally, and everybody is at the head of his department.

DON AL. I see.

MAR. I'm afraid you're annoyed.

DON AL. No. I won't say that. It's not quite what I expected.

GIU. I'm awfully sorry.

MAR. So am I.

GIU. By the by, can I offer you anything after your voyage? A plate of macaroni and a rusk?

DON AL. (*preoccupied*). No, no—nothing—nothing.

GIU. Obliged to be careful?

DON AL. Yes—gout. You see, in every Court there are distinctions that must be observed.

GIU. (*puzzled*). There are, are there?

DON AL. Why, of course. For instance, you wouldn't have a Lord High Chancellor play leapfrog with his own cook.

MAR. Why not?

DON AL. Why not! Because a Lord High Chancellor is a personage of great dignity, who should never, under any circumstances, place himself in the position of being told to tuck in his tuppenny, except by noblemen of his own rank. A Lord High Archbishop, for instance, might tell a Lord High Chancellor to tuck in his tuppenny, but certainly not a cook, gentlemen, certainly not a cook.

GIU. Not even a Lord High Cook?

DON AL. My good friend, that is a rank that is not recognized at the Lord Chamberlain's office. No, no, it won't do. I'll give you an instance in which the experiment was tried.

SONG—DON ALHAMBRA, *with* MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE.

DON AL. There lived a King, as I've been told,
In the wonder-working days of old,
When hearts were twice as good as gold,
And twenty times as mellow.
Good-temper triumphed in his face,
And in his heart he found a place
For all the erring human race
And every wretched fellow.
When he had Rhenish wine to drink
It made him very sad to think
That some, at junket or at jink,
Must be content with toddy.

MAR. *and* GIU. With toddy, must be content with toddy.

DON AL. He wished all men as rich as he
(And he was rich as rich could be),
So to the top of every tree
Promoted everybody.

MAR. *and* GIU. Now, that's the kind of King for me—
He wished all men as rich as he,
So to the top of every tree
Promoted everybody!

DON AL. Lord Chancellors were cheap as sprats,
And Bishops in their shovel hats
Were plentiful as tabby cats—
In point of fact, too many.
Ambassadors cropped up like hay,
Prime Ministers and such as they
Grew like asparagus in May,
And Dukes were three a penny.

On every side Field-Marshals gleamed,
Small beer were Lords-Lieutenant deemed.
With Admirals the ocean teemed
All round his wide dominions.

MAR. *and* GIU. With Admirals all round his wide dominions.

DON AL. And Party Leaders you might meet
In twos and threes in every street
Maintaining, with no little heat,
Their various opinions.

MAR. *and* GIU. Now that's a sight you couldn't beat—
Two Party Leaders in each street
Maintaining, with no little heat,
Their various opinions.

DON AL. That King, although no one denies
His heart was of abnormal size,
Yet he'd have acted otherwise
If he had been acuter.
The end is easily foretold,
When every blessed thing you hold
Is made of silver, or of gold,
You long for simple pewter.
When you have nothing else to wear
But cloth of gold and satins rare,
For cloth of gold you cease to care—
Up goes the price of shoddy.

MAR. *and* GIU. Of shoddy, up goes the price of shoddy.

DON AL. In short, whoever you may be,
To this conclusion you'll agree,
When every one is somebodee,
Then no one's anybody!

MAR. *and* GIU. Now that's as plain as plain can be,
To this conclusion we agree—

ALL. When every one is somebodee,
Then no one's anybody!

GIANETTA *and* TESSA *enter unobserved. The two girls, impelled by curiosity, remain listening at the back of the stage.*

DON AL. And now I have some important news to communicate. His Grace the Duke of Plaza-Toro, Her Grace the Duchess, and their beautiful daughter Casilda—I say their beautiful daughter Casilda——

GIU. We heard you.

DON AL. Have arrived at Barataria, and may be here at any moment.

MAR. The Duke and Duchess are nothing to us.

DON AL. But the daughter—the beautiful daughter! Aha! Oh, you're a lucky dog, one of you!

GIU. I think you're a very incomprehensible old gentleman.

DON AL. Not a bit—I'll explain. Many years ago when you (whichever you are) were a baby, you (whichever you are) were married to a little girl who has grown up to be the most beautiful young lady in Spain. That beautiful young lady will be here to claim you (whichever you are) in half an hour, and I congratulate that one (whichever it is) with all my heart.

MAR. Married when a baby!

GIU. But we were married three months ago!

DON AL. One of you—only one. The other (whichever it is) is an unintentional bigamist.

GIA. *and* TESS. (*coming forward*). Well, upon my word!

DON AL. Eh? Who are these young people?

TESS. Who are we? Why, their wives, of course. We've just arrived.

DON AL. Their wives! Oh dear, this is very unfortunate! Oh dear, this complicates matters! Dear, dear, what will Her Majesty say?

GIA. And do you mean to say that one of these Monarchs was already married?

TESS. And that neither of us will be a Queen?

DON AL. That is the idea I intended to convey (TESSA *and* GIANETTA *begin to cry*.)

GIU. (*to* TESSA). Tessa, my dear, dear child——

TESS. Get away! perhaps it's you!

MAR. (*to* GIA.). My poor, poor little woman!

GIA. Don't! Who knows whose husband you are?

TESS. And pray, why didn't you tell us all about it before they left Venice?

DON AL. Because, if I had, no earthly temptation would have induced these gentlemen to leave two such extremely fascinating and utterly irresistible little ladies!

TESS. There's something in that.

DON AL. I may mention that you will not be kept long in suspense, as the old lady who nursed the Royal child is at present in the torture chamber, waiting for me to interview her.

GIU. Poor old girl. Hadn't you better go and put her out of her suspense?

DON AL. Oh no—there's no hurry—she's all right. She has all the illustrated papers. However, I'll go and interrogate her, and, in the meantime, may I suggest the absolute propriety of your regarding yourselves as single young ladies. Good evening!

[*Exit* DON ALHAMBRA.

GIA. Well, here's a pleasant state of things!

MAR. Delightful. One of us is married to two young ladies, and nobody knows which; and the other is married to one young lady whom nobody can identify!

GIA. And one of us is married to one of you, and the other is married to nobody.

TESS. But which of you is married to which of us, and what's to become of the other? (*About to cry*.)

GIU. It's quite simple. Observe. Two husbands have managed to acquire three wives. Three wives—two husbands. (*Reckoning up*.) That's two-thirds of a husband to each wife.

TESS. O Mount Vesuvius, here we are in arithmetic! My good sir, one can't marry a vulgar fraction!

GIU. You've no right to call me a vulgar fraction.

MAR. We are getting rather mixed. The situation entangled. Let's try and comb it out.

QUARTET—MARCO, GIUSEPPE, GIANETTA, TESSA.

In a contemplative fashion,
And a tranquil frame of mind,
Free from every kind of passion,
Some solution let us find.
Let us grasp the situation,
Solve the complicated plot—
Quiet, calm deliberation
Disentangles every knot.

TESS. I, no doubt, Giuseppe wedded—
That's, of course, a slice of luck.
He is rather dunder-headed,
Still distinctly, he's a duck.

THE OTHERS. In a contemplative fashion, etc.

GIA. I, a victim, too, of Cupid,
Marco married—that is clear.
He's particularly stupid,
Still distinctly, he's a dear.

THE OTHERS. Let us grasp the situation, etc.

MAR. To Gianetta I was mated;
I can prove it in a trice:
Though her charms are overrated,
Still I own she's rather nice.

THE OTHERS. In a contemplative fashion, etc.

GIU. I to Tessa, willy-nilly,
All at once a victim fell.
She is what is called a silly,
Still she answers pretty well.

THE OTHERS. Let us grasp the situation, etc.

MAR. Now when we were pretty babies
Some one married us, that's clear—

GIA. And if I can catch her
I'll pinch her and scratch her,
And send her away with a flea in her ear.

GIU. He whom that young lady married,
To receive her can't refuse.

TESS. If I overtake her
I'll warrant I'll make her
To shake in her aristocratical shoes!

GIA. (*to* TESS.). If she married your Giuseppe
You and he will have to part—

TESS. (*to* GIA.). If I have to do it
I'll warrant she'll rue it—
I'll teach her to marry the man of my heart!

TESS. (*to* GIA.). If she married Messer Marco
You're a spinster, that is plain—

GIA. (*to* TESS.). No matter—no matter
If I can get at her
I doubt if her mother will know her again!

ALL. Quiet, calm deliberation
Disentangles every knot!

[*Exeunt, pondering.*

MARCH. *Enter procession of Retainers, heralding approach of* DUKE, DUCHESS, *and* CASILDA. *All three are now dressed with the utmost magnificence.*

CHORUS OF MEN, *with* DUKE *and* DUCHESS.

With ducal pomp and ducal pride
(Announce these comers,
O ye kettle-drummers!)
Comes Barataria's high-born bride.
(Ye sounding cymbals clang!)
She comes to claim the Royal hand—
(Proclaim their Graces,
O ye double basses!)
Of the King who rules this goodly land.
(Ye brazen brasses bang!)

DUKE *and* DUCH. This polite attention touches
Heart of Duke and heart of Duchess.
Who resign their pet
With profound regret.
She of beauty was a model
When a tiny tiddle-toddle,
And at twenty-one
She's excelled by none !

CHORUS. With ducal pomp and ducal pride, etc.

DUKE (*to his attendants*). Be good enough to inform His Majesty that His Grace the Duke of Plaza-Toro, Limited, has arrived, and begs——

CAS. Desires——

DUCH. Demands——

DUKE. And demands an audience. (*Exeunt attendants.*) And now, my child, prepare to receive the husband to whom you were united under such interesting and romantic circumstances.

CAS. But which is it ? There are two of them !

DUKE. It is true that at present His Majesty is a double gentleman ; but as soon as the circumstances of his marriage are ascertained, he will, *ipso facto*, boil down to a single gentleman—thus presenting a unique example of an individual who becomes a single man and a married man by the same operation.

DUCH. (*severely*). I have known instances in which the characteristics of both conditions existed concurrently in the same individual.

DUKE. Ah, he couldn't have been a Plaza-Toro.

DUCH. Oh ! couldn't he, though !

CAS. Well, whatever happens, I shall, of course, be a dutiful wife, but I can never love my husband.

DUKE. I don't know. It's extraordinary what unprepossessing people one can love if one gives one's mind to it.

DUCH. I loved your father.

DUKE. My love—that remark is a little hard, I think ?

Rather cruel, perhaps? Somewhat uncalled-for, I venture to believe?

DUCH. It was very difficult, my dear; but I said to myself, "That man is a Duke, and I *will* love him." Several of my relations bet me I couldn't, but I did—desperately!

SONG—DUCHESS.

On the day when I was wedded
To your admirable sire,
I acknowledge that I dreaded
An explosion of his ire.
I was overcome with panic—
For his temper was volcanic,
And I didn't dare revolt,
For I feared a thunderbolt!
I was always very wary,
For his fury was ecstatic—
His refined vocabulary
Most unpleasantly emphatic.
To the thunder
Of this Tartar
I knocked under
Like a martyr;
When intently
He was fuming,
I was gently
Unassuming—
When reviling
Me completely,
I was smiling
Very sweetly:
Giving him the very best, and getting back the very worst—
That is how I tried to tame your great progenitor—at first!

But I found that a reliance
On my threatening appearance,
And a resolute defiance
Of marital interference,

And a gentle intimation
Of my firm determination
To see what I could do
To be wife and husband too
Was the only thing required
For to make his temper supple,
And you couldn't have desired
A more reciprocating couple.
Ever willing
To be wooing,
We were billing—
We were cooing;
When I merely
From him parted,
We were nearly
Broken-hearted—
When in sequel
Reunited,
We were equal-
Ly delighted.
So with double-shotted guns and colours nailed unto the mast,
I tamed your insignificant progenitor—at last!

CAS. My only hope is that when my husband sees what a shady family he has married into he will repudiate the contract altogether.

DUKE. Shady? A nobleman shady, who is blazing in the lustre of unaccustomed pocket-money? A nobleman shady, who can look back upon ninety-five quarterings? It is not every nobleman who is ninety-five quarters in arrear—I mean, who can look back upon ninety-five of them! And this, just as I have been floated at a premium! Oh fie!

DUCH. Your Majesty is surely unaware that directly Your Majesty's father came before the public he was applied for over and over again.

DUKE. My dear, Her Majesty's father was in the habit

of being applied for over and over again—and very urgently applied for, too—long before he was registered under the Limited Liability Act.

RECIT.—DUKE.

To help unhappy commoners, and add to their enjoyment,
Affords a man of noble rank congenial employment ;
Of our attempts we offer you examples illustrative :
The work is light, and, I may add, it's most remunerative.

DUET—DUKE *and* DUCHESS.

DUKE. Small titles and orders
For Mayors and Recorders
I get—and they're highly delighted—

DUCH. They're highly delighted !

DUKE. M.P.'s baronetted,
Sham Colonels gazetted,
And second-rate Aldermen knighted—

DUCH. Yes, Aldermen knighted.

DUKE. Foundation-stone laying
I find very paying :
It adds a large sum to my makings—

DUCH. Large sums to his makings.

DUKE. At charity dinners
The best of speech-spinners,
I get ten per cent on the takings—

DUCH. One-tenth of the takings.

DUCH. I present any lady
Whose conduct is shady
Or smacking of doubtful propriety—

DUKE. Doubtful propriety.

DUCH. When Virtue would quash her,
I take and whitewash her,
And launch her in first-rate society—

DUKE. First-rate society!

DUCH. I recommend acres
Of clumsy dressmakers—
Their fit and their finishing touches—

DUKE. Their finishing touches.

DUCH. A sum in addition
They pay for permission
To say that they make for the Duchess—

DUKE. They make for the Duchess!

DUKE. Those pressing prevailers,
The ready-made tailors,
Quote me as their great double-barrel—

DUCH. Their great double-barrel.

DUKE. I allow them to do so,
Though Robinson Crusoe
Would jib at their wearing apparel—

DUCH. Such wearing apparel!

DUKE. I sit, by selection,
Upon the direction
Of several Companies bubble—

DUCH. All Companies bubble!

DUKE. As soon as they're floated
I'm freely bank-noted—
I'm pretty well paid for my trouble—

DUCH. He's paid for his trouble!

DUCH. At middle-class party
I play at *écarté*—
And I'm by no means a beginner—

DUKE (*significantly*). She's not a beginner.

DUCH. To one of my station
The remuneration—
Five guineas a night and my dinner—

DUKE. And wine with her dinner.

DUCH. I write letters blatant
On medicines patent—
And use any other you mustn't—

DUKE. Believe me, you mustn't—

DUCH. And vow my complexion
Derives its perfection
From somebody's soap—which it doesn't—

DUKE (*significantly*). It certainly doesn't!

DUKE. We're ready as witness
To any one's fitness
To fill any place or preferment—

DUCH. A place or preferment.

DUCH. We're often in waiting
At junket or *fêting*,
And sometimes attend an interment—

DUKE. We enjoy an interment.

BOTH. In short, if you'd kindle
The spark of a swindle,
Lure simpletons into your clutches—
Yes; into your clutches.
Or hoodwink a debtor,
You cannot do better

DUCH. Than trot out a Duke or a Duchess—

DUKE. A Duke or a Duchess!

Enter MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE.

DUKE. Ah! Their Majesties. Your Majesty! (*Bows with great ceremony.*)

MAR. The Duke of Plaza-Toro, I believe?

DUKE. The same. (MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *offer to shake hands with him. The* DUKE *bows ceremoniously. They endeavour to imitate him.*) Allow me to present——

GIU. The young lady one of us married?

(MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *offer to shake hands with her.* CASILDA *curtsies formally. They endeavour to imitate her.*)

CAS. Gentlemen, I am the most obedient servant of one of you. (*Aside.*) Oh, Luiz!

DUKE. I am now about to address myself to the gentleman whom my daughter married; the other may allow his attention to wander if he likes, for what I am about to say does not concern him. Sir, you will find in this young lady a combination of excellences which you would search for in vain in any young lady who had not the good fortune to be my daughter. There is some little doubt as to which of you is the gentleman I am addressing, and which is the gentleman who is allowing his attention to wander; but when that doubt is solved, I shall say (still addressing the attentive gentleman), "Take her, and may she make you happier than her mother has made me."

DUCH. Sir!

DUKE. If possible. And now there is a little matter to which I think I am entitled to take exception. I come here in state with Her Grace the Duchess and Her Majesty my daughter, and what do I find? Do I find, for instance, a guard of honour to receive me? No!

MAR. *and* GIU. No.

DUKE. The town illuminated? No!

MAR. *and* GIU. No.

DUKE. Refreshment provided? No!

MAR. *and* GIU. No.

DUKE. A Royal salute fired? No!

MAR. *and* GIU. No.

DUKE. Triumphal arches erected? No!

MAR. *and* GIU. No.

DUKE. The bells set ringing ?

MAR. *and* GIU. No.

DUKE. Yes—one—the Visitors', and I rang it myself. It is not enough ! It is not enough !

GIU. Upon my honour, I'm very sorry ; but you see, I was brought up in a gondola, and my ideas of politeness are confined to taking off my cap to my passengers when they tip me.

DUCH. That's all very well in its way, but it is not enough.

GIU. I'll take off anything else in reason.

DUKE. But a Royal Salute to my daughter—it costs so little.

CAS. Papa, I don't want a salute.

GIU. My dear sir, as soon as we know which of us is entitled to take that liberty she shall have as many salutes as she likes.

MAR. As for guards of honour and triumphal arches, you don't know our people—they wouldn't stand it.

GIU. They are very off-hand with us—very off-hand indeed.

DUKE. Oh, but you mustn't allow that—you must keep them in proper discipline, you must impress your Court with your importance. You want deportment—carriage——

GIU. We've got a carriage.

DUKE. Manner—dignity. There must be a good deal of this sort of thing—(*business*)—and a little of this sort of thing—(*business*)—and possibly just a *soupçon* of this sort of thing !—(*business*)—and so on. Oh, it's very useful, and most effective. Just attend to me. You are a King—I am a subject. Very good——

GAVOTTE.

DUKE, DUCHESS, CASILDA, MARCO, GIUSEPPE.

DUKE. I am a courtier grave and serious
Who is about to kiss your hand :
Try to combine a pose imperious
With a demeanour nobly bland.

MAR. *and* GIU. Let us combine a pose imperious
With a demeanour nobly bland.

(MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE *endeavour to carry out his instructions.*)

DUKE. That's, if anything, *too* unbending—
Too aggressively stiff and grand ;

(*They suddenly modify their attitudes.*)

Now to the other extreme you're tending—
Don't be so deucedly condescending !

DUCH. *and* CAS. Now to the other extreme you're tending—
Don't be so dreadfully condescending !

MAR. *and* GIU. Oh, hard to please some noblemen seem !
At first, if anything, *too* unbending ;
Off we go to the other extreme—
Too confoundedly condescending !

DUKE. Now a gavotte perform sedately—
Offer your hand with conscious pride ;
Take an attitude not too stately,
Still sufficiently dignified.

MAR. *and* GIU. Now for an attitude not too stately,
Still sufficiently dignified.

(*They endeavour to carry out his instructions.*)

DUKE (*beating time*).
Oncely, twicely—oncely, twicely—
Bow impressively ere you glide.

(*They do so.*)

Capital both—you've caught it nicely !
That is the style of thing precisely !

DUCH. *and* CAS. Capital both—they've caught it nicely !
That is the style of thing precisely !

MAR. *and* GIU. Oh, sweet to earn a nobleman's praise!
Capital both—we've caught it nicely!
Supposing he's right in what he says,
This is the style of thing precisely!

[GAVOTTE. *At the end exeunt* DUKE *and* DUCHESS, *leaving* CASILDA *with* MARCO *and* GIUSEPPE.

GIU. (*to* MARCO). The old birds have gone away and left the young chickens together. That's called tact.

MAR. It's very awkward. We really ought to tell her how we are situated. It's not fair to the girl.

GIU. Then why don't you do it?

MAR. I'd rather not—you.

GIU. I don't know how to begin. (*To* CASILDA.) A—Madam—I—we, that is, several of us——

CAS. Gentlemen, I am bound to listen to you; but it is right to tell you that, not knowing I was married in infancy, I am over head and ears in love with somebody else.

GIU. Our case exactly! *We* are over head and ears in love with somebody else! (*Enter* GIANETTA *and* TESSA.) In point of fact, with our wives!

CAS. Your wives! Then you are married?

TESS. It's not our fault.

GIA. We knew nothing about it.

BOTH. We are sisters in misfortune.

CAS. My good girls, I don't blame you. Only before we go any further we must really arrive at some satisfactory arrangement, or we shall get hopelessly complicated.

QUINTET AND FINALE.

MARCO, GIUSEPPE, CASILDA, GIANETTA, TESSA.

ALL. Here is a case unprecedented!
Here are a King and Queen ill-starred!
Ever since marriage was first invented
Never was known a case so hard!

MAR. *and* GIU. I may be said to have been bisected,
By a profound catastrophe!

CAS., GIA., TESS. Through a calamity unexpected
I am divisible into three!

ALL. O moralists all,
How can you call
Marriage a state of unitee,
When excellent husbands are bisected,
And wives divisible into three?
O moralists all,
How can you call
Marriage a state of union true?

CAS., GIA., TESS. One-third of myself is married to half of ye or you,
MAR. *and* GIU. When half of myself has married one-third of ye or you?

Enter DON ALHAMBRA, *followed by* DUKE, DUCHESS, *and all the* CHORUS.

FINALE.

RECIT.—DON ALHAMBRA.

Now let the loyal lieges gather round—
The Prince's foster-mother has been found!
She will declare, to silver clarion's sound,
The rightful King—let him forthwith be crowned!

CHORUS. She will declare, etc.

(DON ALHAMBRA *brings forward* INEZ, *the Prince's foster-mother.*)

TESS. Speak, woman, speak—
DUKE. We're all attention!
GIA. The news we seek—
DUCH. This moment mention.

CAS. To us they bring—
DON AL. His foster-mother.
MAR. Is he the King?
GIU. Or this my brother?

ALL. Speak, woman, speak, etc.

RECIT.—INEZ.

The Royal Prince was by the King entrusted
To my fond care, ere I grew old and crusted:
When traitors came to steal his son reputed,
My own small boy I deftly substituted!
The villains fell into the trap completely—
I hid the Prince away—still sleeping sweetly:
I called him "son" with pardonable slyness—
His name, Luiz! Behold his Royal Highness!

(*Sensation.* LUIZ *ascends the throne, crowned and robed as King.*)

CAS. (*rushing to his arms*). Luiz!
LUIZ. Casilda! (*Embrace.*)

ALL. Is this indeed the King?
Oh, wondrous revelation!
Oh, unexpected thing!
Unlooked-for situation!

MAR., GIA., GIU., TESS. This statement we receive
With sentiments conflicting;
Our hearts rejoice and grieve,
Each other contradicting;
To those whom we adore
We can be reunited—
On one point rather sore,
But, on the whole, delighted!

LUIZ. When others claimed thy dainty hand,
I waited—waited—waited,

DUKE. As prudence (so I understand)
Dictated—tated—tated.

CAS. By virtue of our early vow
Recorded—corded—corded,

DUCH. Your pure and patient love is now
Rewarded—warded—warded.

ALL. Then hail, O King of a Golden Land,
And the high-born bride who claims his hand!
The past is dead, and you gain your own,
A royal crown and a golden throne!

(*All kneel:* LUIZ *crowns* CASILDA.)

ALL. Once more *gondolieri*,
Both skilful and wary,
Free from this quandary
Contented are we.
From Royalty flying,
Our gondolas plying,
And merrily crying
Our "*premé*," "*stalè!*"

So good-bye, cachucha, fandango, bolero—
We'll dance a farewell to that measure—
Old Xeres, adieu—Manzanilla—Montero—
We leave you with feelings of pleasure!

CURTAIN.

Printed in Great Britain by R. & R. CLARK, LIMITED, *Edinburgh.*